8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

361 themselves in a proud segregation, stand the more pretentious houses of a residential area, and the great grey buildings in which local government and justice are housed. But the centre remains the point at which the shop-lined streets that lead from deep within the countryside converge. The life of the country and that of the town meet and mingle along these converging lines.

175 361 That mingling represents the latest stage of an age-old struggle in which the countryside has won out at last. It has been a conquest of assimilation, like the victories of Chinese life over the barbarian invader. The town in Irish history was originally, and often long remained, a foreign growth. In the great age of Celtic civilization, the monastery and the royal seat centred Irish life. Later the Celto-Norman castle scorned an urban fortress wall. The town was first a Danish importation; only Galway, of Irish cities, was not a Norseman's settlement. Throughout the long wars and counter-wars with the English foe and the alien English life, the town was many times alternately absorbed by native life and reconquered for the alien. Even Galway still bore its famous inscription above its city gate not three centuries ago. "O Lord," it read, "deliver us from the fury of the O'Flaherties." Law, at first, forbade even the entrance of the 'Irishry' into the towns and then later decreed that no Irishman should trade with another. The towns were to remain English, and later, Protestant, and

8:Arensberg E-5 (1932-1934) 1937
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the merchant-burghers who flourished in them must remain of English blood and habit.

All that, of course, has long since vanished. The Irish have occupied the towns of their own land, their blood and habit hold sway and fashion urban commerce in the towns and cities. The change has been a slow and durable growth, flowing on beneath the surface of political and cultural strife. But like all growth it has been a process of incorporation, too. Today, to a casual eye, the shops, the commerce, the social life of the Irish town is much like that of all modern western Europe.

Such is the history, briefly put, which has provided the scene that interests the social anthropologist. It is in this scene that he can inquire into the bonds this conquest has created. He can appraise through them the factors which make up the countryman's participation in the larger world. Many fields for investigation present themselves in this connection. Townsmen and countrymen are now equally part, each in his own way, of that whole we name Irish society. From his own vantage each acts toward the other and builds up a relationship with him in such a way as to determine in some degree the form of that whole. This relation, an instance of the age-old reciprocity between town and country, invites our examination.

In Ireland today, one can see this relation most definitely and most significantly in the ties between shopkeeper and countryman. In the west and south

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

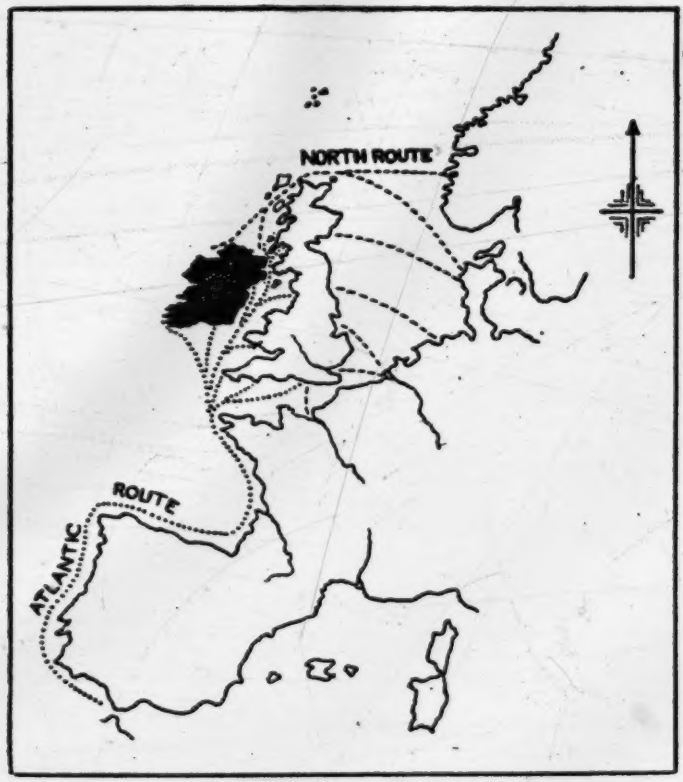

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Fig. 1. Ireland and the seaways of "Atlantic" Europe.

The routes from the south brought ancient civilization to the island about 2000 B.C.

[p. 9]

CHAPTER II.

HOW IRELAND TOOK SHAPE.

101 131 "To comprehend the homestead and its home-folk, from the thatch of the roof to the colour of the children's hair, we must find the locality on the domed surface of the earth, and must realize that this earth is a very large and dominant region round it." So wrote the late Grenville Cole, wisest of Ireland's geographers. This island, then, lies in the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean, midway between the Lofoten Islands and the Straits of Gibraltar, a detached but not isolated fragment of the drowned coast of Eurasia. Throughout the ages, as Europe sank repeatedly under the waters of the ocean, this outer margin, worn down by rains and rivers, received fresh marine deposits over and over again, so that its rocks record all the main features of the history of western Europe.

133 175 Lying in the middle latitudes of the continent, it shares the converging mountain systems of north and south, the older axis of Scandinavia dominating the build of the north of Ireland while the younger axis linked with France and Spain prevails in the south. The lead thus given in the remote ages of geology has been followed, over and over again, by man and his cultures converging on this last outpost of Europe. From across the Atlantic, too, Ireland has received much in recent centuries; here the alien potato was first welcomed; and it was the "praty" which drove masses of Irishmen back along the route it had itself taken. "Ireland lieth aloof in

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9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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133 the West Ocean," wrote Campion, but one cannot attempt to
●175 interpret Ireland without reference to its neighbouring lands and seas. The links with Britain are strongest and oldest alike in geology and history, in the north-east. Here both rocks and men have common roots on both sides of the North Channel: from Carlingford round to Swilly this "Region of the Loughs" looks out towards familiar coasts and islands. In geology as in history, it is as difficult to consider Ireland apart from Britain as the islets of Ireland apart from Ireland. A brief summary will reveal a geological story as troubled as its political history. Fig. 2.

133 The oldest rocks are the gnarled and crumpled sediments of the north and west, running in broken masses from Connemara to north Antrim. Here the resistent hardened sandstones (quartzites) stand up in conspicuous cones (Errigal, Muckish, Croagh Patrick, the Twelve Pins) while the gleaming schists are generally worn down into bog-filled hollows, though they rise to over 2,000 feet in the Sperrins. These rocks, together with great thicknesses of shales and mudstones worn off them, were involved in the great earth-ridgings named, from their presence in Scotland, "Caledonian." Further south, hard quartzites also give the Great Sugarloaf of Co. Wicklow its bold outline, while massive intrusions of molten rock forced up during the Caledonian folding cooled to give wide exposures of moorland granites both in the long chain of the Wicklows and in scattered hills of the north and west.

Next in succession came the Old Red Sandstones, formed under semi-arid conditions out of the débris of sand and pebbles rolled down from the mountains. As the sea flooded back once more, a rich marine life left behind a great thickness of limestone, still to-day, despite its solubility and rapid weathering, the most continuous and widespread of all the Irish rocks. The Great Central Plain, worn down to a uniform level, is floored with limestone, and the seas have cut into it, in Donegal and Galway Bays, so as to separate the three mountain masses of the west coast and leave Connacht projecting like a Wilder Wales from the Irish mainland.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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Corrib). Difficulties of communication are such that the Central Plain has never been central in anything more than name: Athlone has become a national centre only with radio communication, and the Shannon remains a boundary river throughout its course. The important part of the plain is the fifty mile stretch which faces the Irish Sea between the bays of Dundalk and Dublin, the heart of the old Kingdom of Meath and of the English Pale, and the setting of Ireland's capital sites from the sacred tombs of New Grange through the age of Celtic Tara to the historic city of Dublin. One factor in the location of this metropolitan area is suggested by Fig. 8; it is favoured by the relatively low rainfall of less than 30 ins.

133 [207] 133 175 [132]

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
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172 ages. It was probably in the late Bronze Age that oats, introduced perhaps from Spain, found their place as the leading corn-crop of Ireland and Highland Britain, better adapted than wheat to the damp conditions. The working of " bog iron-ore "—found in concretions in swampy places—is attested from the early Iron Age, and the traditions of the country smith have their origins in this period. Man's attack on the woodlands was accelerated with the possession of iron axes and adzes. We are not able to say how far Roman culture and novelties influenced the pattern of Irish life. Was poultry their contribution, and what of the cabbage, the only common Irish vegetable before the potato came in? Nor must we omit the contributions of the continental contacts maintained throughout the early Christian period, above all in improved architecture and the fine arts as well as in traditions of gardening and orchard-planting. Their influence can be seen, no doubt, in the relatively high standards of living and cultivation around places like Armagh. And it is to the early Christians and the Vikings that Ireland owes its earliest cities. From the Vikings, too, much was borrowed in matters of boat-building and metal-working. Since Norman times the contacts with Britain have steadily increased.

● 175 244 But we have yet to record the import of most significance for Irish peasant life—the introduction of the potato from the New World. The part that this crop has played in the social history of the island is a subject which calls for full investigation. While it gave bulky yields as food for man and beast, its cultivation brought about a decline in crops such as rye and beans. Thriving on a minimum of attention, its social influence has not been altogether for good: its effects on native habits might be compared with those of another New World crop, maize, in southern Europe and Africa. Ripening underground, potatoes had a great advantage over corn in the wet and windy climate of the west. Moreover the crop was less easy to pillage: " even the soldiers could not extirpate them." By the middle of the 17th century the newcomer was well established in Ireland.

9: Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1942
ER6 Rural Irish ER6

It undoubtedly helped the Irish peasants to survive through troubled times, enabled them to live on the hills and waste places to which they were driven, and also to multiply exceedingly in the decades before the great famines of the forties.

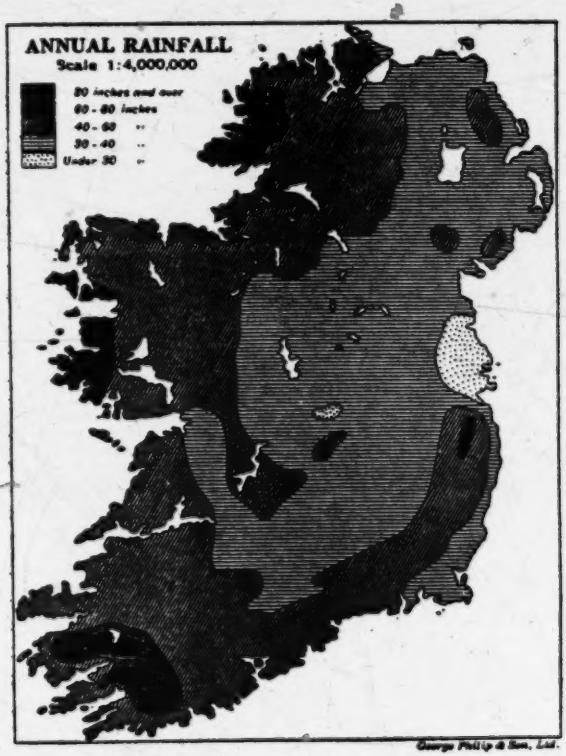

Fig. 8.

It will be well at this stage to say something of the climate and crops of present-day Ireland. The abundant rainfall, the prevailing cloud-cover, the high degree of atmospheric humidity, the strong winds, the cool summers and mild

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

There is another cross in the church which is of much finer workmanship, and is probably the true *Leac Leo*. In 1870, when Mr. Kinahan visited the island, the church was in ruins, and was used as a cattle pen, and the cross, or a stone coffin lid, he is not at this time able to say which, was set up on its side, leaving a space between it and the wall to form a trough. 172 [231]

(3.) *St Leo's Cave* (*Uaimh Leo*), on the south side of the island.

(4.) *Thobhar Leo.*—St. Leo's Well is situated, not in the cave, but some distance from the top of a deep and almost precipitous cove, called *Fuath Leo.*

(5.) *Cloghan Leo* is a small round cell, now almost completely ruinous, built within an enclosure of very little larger area. The saint's footprint is pointed out in the rock on which the building stands.

VII.—HISTORY.

As a Paper of this nature would be incomplete without some mention of the changes and vicissitudes that the population of the islands has undergone, a slight historical sketch is attempted here. It is not, and does not pretend to be, complete, as unfortunately the material available is very scanty, especially in regard to its earlier history; for, though the Venerable Bede, the Four Masters, and others make several references to the islands, yet these nearly all relate to ecclesiastical events, which have at most only a secondary bearing on the history of the people, and are not within the scope of this Paper. 175

The annalists record that in the second century a tribe of the Firbolgs (Clann Humoir) who occupied that part of the mainland opposite the islands were conquered and enslaved by Tuathal Teachtmar, a Scotic or Milesian monarch, and it is probable, if the islands were inhabited by members of the first-named people, that they shared the same fate as the rest of their tribe. It is not known whether such was the case, as this is "the only mention of this teritory while in the hands of the Belgae," says O'Donovan in his "Letters," except that one of their chiefs named Modh, or Modha, gave his name to Inis Modha, or the Clew Bay islands. After the conquest of the Clann Humoir the territory came into the hands of the Milesians, and the records about it relate, at first, to the deaths of their chiefs, and later on in the 9th century to the incursions of pirates (believed to have been Scandinavians), but make no specific mention of Inishbofin or its inhabitants.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

● 175 In A.D. 667 (according to the Four Masters, the Venerable Bede, and others), St. Colman, having quarrelled with Wilfridus at Lindisfarne, left that place, where he had been bishop for seven-and-twenty years previously, and taking with him all the Scots (Irish) among the monks, and in addition, some thirty English, he sailed away to Inishbofin, where he settled and founded the abbey in Knock-quarter. To quote the words of the Venerable Bede (given in Hardiman's Notes on O'Flaherty's "H-Iar Connaught"), "Secessit ad insulam quondam parvam, quæ ad occidentalem plagam ab Hibernia procul secreta, sermone Scotico *Inisbofinde*, id est, 'Insula Vitulæ Albæ' nuncupatur." When they had got settled on the island a quarrel arose between the Irish monks and their English brethren, who apparently did not get the best of the dispute, for St. Colman founded a monastery for them at Magh-eo on the mainland, but seems himself to have lived mostly in Inishbofin, where he died on the 8th of August, 676.

From this time forth until the tenth century, when all mention of the abbey ceases, there are several references made by the annalists to the island, but these all relate to the deaths of various abbots or bishops, and no mention is made of any other population than the monastic one.

After this there is a large gap in the records. Hardiman says:—"From the seventh century to the seventeenth this island was little known beyond the neighbouring shores of Iar Connaught and Umhall ui Mhaille; but during the latter eventful century it was considered of importance by the then contending parties in Ireland, and was alternately fortified by them."[1] The only break in this long period of silence is the traditional account of the possession, for a time, of the islands by a piratical crew, and of the establishment there, in the sixteenth century, of a fort and station for her fleet by the celebrated Grace O'Malley.

On the 14th February, 1652, the islands surrendered to the Parliamentary forces, and it was at first resolved to repair the fort, which seems to have been done, for it was occupied for three years afterwards, and in 1655, it was recommended to the Council of State that the garrison should be withdrawn, the works abandoned, and that £600, along with the right to "sell the barque Elizabeth, of Galway, which was sent to Buffin to carry limestone[2] there," should be granted to any undertaker who would block up the harbour.

[1] "H-Iar Connaught," p. 116, footnote.

[2] The limestone referred to was probably the cut stone doorway and corner stones of the fort.

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

The recommendation was not carried out, however, for in 1656, the fort was repaired and provided with larger guns, instead of some of those formerly in use, of which there were twenty-two. In the same year it was resolved to appoint an "able pious and orthodox minister of the gospell to be settled in Bofin and paid by the company" also "that Sir Charles Coote do consider of ordering that Colonel John Honnor, the governor there shall suffer no Irish to keepe any boats upon any part of that coast of Ir-conaght the co. of Mayo, or adjacent islands" also to exclude all "ill affected Irish" from the island, and to remove from the same all dangerous persons, to appoint a magistrate and make good highways towards the islands. 175●

During the Commonwealth the island, as well as the Aran Islands, was used as a prison for priests and monks deported thither from the mainland, and allowed sixpence a-day for their maintenance. The garrison is said to have been kept up for protection against the Dutch, who had formerly made use of the fisheries there, and for whose ships the harbour would have offered a safe place of retreat. Richard O'Flaherty, writing in the reign of Charles II. (1684), makes no mention of the history of the islands beyond stating that they had formerly belonged to "this countrey of Conmacny-mara (Connemara) in old times," but had for three hundred years belonged to "the Owles," the Anglicized form of Umhall, or Umhall Ui Maille, the ancient territory of the O'Malleys, which comprised the modern baronies of Murrisk and Burrishoole, in the County Mayo, which were formerly named Umhall uachtrach, and Umhall iochtrach, or Upper and Lower Umhall.

In the reign of James II. the island gave the title of Baron Bophin to John, ninth Earl of Clanricarde.

Whether the garrison was regularly kept up after the restoration is uncertain, but it was so during the war in the reign of James II., for we learn that Colonel O'Riordan, who held the place for that monarch, surrendered to a detachment of the Williamite troops after the capitulation of Galway. The victorious party now garrisoned the place for a while to keep off the French privateers, who would otherwise have made use of Bofin Harbour, as a secure station.

The islands are but seldom mentioned after this, indeed they seem hardly to have been known to the outer world. In Seward's "Topographica Hibernia" (1795), Inishbofin is barely mentioned, and Carlisle's "Topographical Dictionary of Ireland" (1810) speaks of it as supposed to contain 1200 acres, and to be situated at the distance of about a mile and a-half from the mainland; its valuation in the King's

10: Browne D-5 (1893) 1894
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Inishbofin

175 Books was at that time ten shillings sterling. In neither of these works is Inishshark mentioned.

The islands seem to have remained in the possession of the Clanricarde family until early in the present century, when they passed, by exchange into the hands of the then Marquess of Sligo, from whom they came into the possession of the Wilberforce family, and from them into the hands of the present proprietor, Cyril Allies, Esq. The islands were transferred on 1st February, 1873, from the barony of Murrisk, County of Mayo, to the barony of Ballynahinch, County of Galway, by an Order in Council.

The establishment of the fishery station and the construction of new piers at Knock, and at the landing-place at Inishshark, by the Government in 1892, are the latest occurrences in the history of the islands.

VIII.—Ethnology.

174 In the present condition of Irish ethnology, it would be vain to attempt to propound any theory or form any exact conclusion as to what race or admixture of races gave origin to the present inhabitants of the islands. Their own traditional history speaks of the intermarriage of some of the islanders with members of the Cromwellian garrison, and of an earlier introduction of a foreign element (some say French, others Danish or Spanish) by a piratical colony; and I am informed by Mr. G. H. Kinahan that he has heard that "a good sprinkling of foreigners remained in Bofin, that went there while the mine was working."

Judging from the list of surnames given on a preceding page, it would appear that the amount of foreign blood introduced must be considerably exaggerated, as an analysis of the list shows that a great majority of the names are those of old Connaught families. If the name of the proprietor of the islands, who is English, be left out, there are just fifty surnames on the islands, and thirty-three of these are distinctively Irish, and most of them are to be found in the account of the tribes of Hy Fiachrach, compiled by Duald Mac Firbis (though nearly all in Anglicized forms), eight are Welsh or Anglo-Norman, but of old standing in Connaught, dating back to the 13th century, two are Scotch (Naughton and M'Kendrick); one, Scuffle, is asserted by the people to be of Scandinavian or other foreign origin, and may probably be a corruption of Scholfield or Scovell; another, Lavelle, seems to be considered locally to be foreign also, but it is

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

161 The distribution of population, inhabited houses, and outbuildings was as follows in 1891 :—

Locality.	Area.	Population.			Houses.	Outbuildings and Farmsteadings.
		Persons.	Males.	Females.		
	A. R. P.					
The Mullet, .	23,333 1 27	3757	1893	1864	600	532
N. Inishkea, .	464 1 32	126	60	66	21	4
S. Inishkea, .	344 3 19	180	92	88	32	33
23 Islets, . .	350 0 17	48	22	26	10	27
Portacloy, .	7845 1 1	299	148	151	54	29
Totals, . . .	32,338 0 6	410	2215	2195	717	625

423 311 (B.) *Acreage and Rental.*—The total area of the district is that of Kilmore, being 29,492 acres, and the three townlands forming the Portacloy district, 7,845 acres.

435 The total valuation of Kilmore is £4,055 18*s.*, and of Portacloy £163 7*s.*

There is very little commonage in the Mullet, but about Portacloy there is a good deal.

427 The holdings are not large, averaging about 4½ or 5 acres at a rental of about £3 10*s.* in the Mullet, and about £2 10*s.* in "the mountains." There is considerable variation, however, as there are some farms of good size, but the majority are small.

In 1891 there were, in Kilmore, 210 holdings of between £4 and £10 valuation, 305 of £2 and under £4, and no less than 252 at, or under, £2 valuation.

The land is mostly held now at judicial rentals (the people having early taken advantage of the Land Act of 1881), but sixty years ago the greater part of the land was held in common, and the mode of tenure is thus described by Knight :—"In the whole of the peninsula there are few farms divided . . . the usual system being commonage both in tillage and pasture. In tillage, lots are cast every third year for the number of ridges each person is entitled to after the usual rotation is over. Potatoes the first year, then barley or oats, after which new lots must be cast for new potato ground. The holdings are by sums or collops, which originally meant the number

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

of heads of cattle the farm could rear by *pasture*; but as some tillage became afterwards necessary, they divided the crop-ground into collops also, as well as the pasture, and each farm then had its number of tillage collops and of grazing collops. The tillage collop is supposed to be capable of supporting one family by its produce. In many instances poor families have no pasture to correspond with their tillage collop, and even of this they may have only a half or quarter, called a *geerla*. . . . The prices of these collops vary according to the quality of the farm; the average is about one guinea. The pasture collop is the grass of a horse, or a cow, or two year old heifers, or six or eight sheep. It is evident from this system, that although a man may expend a good deal of labour in digging and manuring his ridge, it is only a chance whether he will enjoy the labour so expended the third year, and hence that he is careless of future benefits, and that, of course, the land will be but imperfectly cultivated. . . . There is a headman or *king* appointed in every village, who is deputed to cast the lots every third year, and to arrange with the community what work is to be done during the year in fencing, &c. . . . The king takes care generally to have the rent collected, applots the proportion of taxes with the other elders of the village, for all is done in a patriarchal way, *coram populo*."

The following table, extracted from Mr. Knight's valuable little book on Erris (p. 58), is given here as illustrating the condition of people sixty years ago.

KNIGHT'S POPULATION TABLE.

Population, &c.			Remarks.
Families,		1723	
Males,	4290	8662	By public census, in the year 1831, 9287; but I believe this to be more correct. The whole Barony, in 1821, was 17,879; in 1831, 22,824.
Females,	4372		
Rental,		£4300	Or about 50*s.* to each family.
Sums or collops,		4469	Green acres as before 6100; collops different in size and quality, more than 2½ to each family.
Amount of Tithes,		£258	There is no composition, the old mode followed in collecting. There is now (1834) a composition for £300.
Boats (sail),		5	These six items show the little attention paid to the fishing, one boat of *every kind* in thirteen families, and one net in every seven. Three or four families frequently join in a boat, and two or three in a herring net, or set of nets.
Boats (row),		88	
Curraghs,		38	
Nets,		256	
Lines,		131	
Spilletts,		8	

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

KNIGHT'S POPULATION TABLE—*continued.*

Population, &c.			Remarks.
Horses,	587	943	Or only one beast of burden nearly, to every two families. Major Bingham and a few others have some good horses. The general breed is small, but hardy.
Asses,	356		
Cows,		1967	This is more than one to each family.
Sheep,		2348	
Pigs,		919	
Ploughs,			At Major Bingham's, Rev. Mr. Dawson's, and Rev. Mr. Lyons's.
Carts,			Same.
Feather beds,		624	Or nearly one to every third family. The substitute—straw, rushes, or bent.
Blankets,		1838	
Men without shoes,		734	
Men, women, and children,		3156	Wanting clothes, or nearly one-third of the whole population.
Buying provisions,		751	In a year of great plenty, but after two of great scarcity.
Sick,		454	
Died (1831),		236	
Carriages (four-wheeled),		2	
Carriages (two-wheeled),		8	

(c.) *Language and Illiteracy—Language.*—I regret to be unable to give here the proportion of people speaking Irish alone, and Irish and English, as the census authorities make the return by baronies only. The great majority of the people are bi-lingual, speaking both Irish and English, employing Irish mainly when speaking among themselves, but there is some small proportion, especially among the older people, who speak no English. The inhabitants of Inishkea do not usually speak anything but Irish on their own islands, though having a fair knowledge of English; but many of the women on these islands have no knowledge of the last-named language. About Portacloy there are many who "have no English."

Illiteracy.—The return for this is given by parishes. In Kilmore, in 1891, there were 3590 persons of five years old and upwards; of these 2135 or 59·5 per. cent. were illiterate.

	Persons.	Male.	Female.
Number above 5 years,	3590	1811	1779
Illiterate,	2135	978	1157
Percentage,	59·5	54·0	65·0

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

VII.—History.

175 The history of the district forms a necessary portion of a report such as this, to show what changes have occurred in the composition of the population, what elements have been imported, and their effects. Unfortunately the material for a history of Erris is both meagre and much scattered, long periods being left unaccounted for, except by vague tradition or by the fanciful conjectures of some writers.

The following sketch, though not pretending to be complete, gives an outline of what seems to be the recorded history as gathered from the few writers who have dealt with the subject.

Erris was anciently known as *Iorrus Domhnann* from its earliest recorded possessors the *Domhnanns* or Damnonii ("deep diggers"), a party of Firbolgs, who, landing at Broad Haven under the leadership of their chiefs *Genann* and *Rudhraighe*, settled the surrounding country, which they held for some centuries, together with another tribe of the same people, the Gamaradii (*Gamhraidhe Iorris*). They were first subjugated to some extent by the *Danaans*, and in the second century, were, according to the annalists, conquered and enslaved by Tuathal Teachtmar, a Milesian or Scotic monarch; it does not appear, however, that the conquerers in either case drove out or exterminated the original population, who were probably too numerous for that, and it is even doubtful if it was permanently subjugated, as many of the old writers speak of the Belgae as being still in power in the fifth century. From this period until the year 1180, there is no record of the people. Adamnan indeed speaks of the district as Erris of the Damnonii, but does not state whether that people were still in power or no. Respecting this long silence, O'Donovan says (MS. Letters): "I, who have felt deep interest in the history of Erris these seven years, and who have studied a great part of the "*rags and rhymes*" of history, have not yet discovered any notice of it from the period of the Belgae till the year 1180, when the Fiachrian O'Caithniadh[1] is mentioned as the chief of it.

The following are the records in the "Annals of the Four Masters" respecting this family:—

"A.D. 1180.—Aodh O'Caithniadh, lord of Iorris, was treacherously slain by O'Ceallachain at Cill Chomain."

"A.D. 1206.—Caithniadh O'Cathniadh, lord of Iorris, died."

[1] This name is probably modernised O'Kane.

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
ER6 Rural Irish ER6
Kilmore

"A.D. 1274.—Feargal O'Caithniadh, lord of Iorris, died in Hy-Mac Caichaim (near Invermore, in the north of Erris)." 175●

These O'Caithniadhs were thus in power up to the end of the thirteenth century, after which there is no more mention made of them. They were a branch of the descendants of Fiachra, a Milesian chieftain, and Erris, during their sway, formed part of the region known as Hy Fiachrach or the O'Dowda's country. The chief seats of the O'Dowd's in Erris were *Oileach of the King's*, a fort built nearly on the spot where Bingham's Castle now stands, and Dun Caechain (now Dun Keeghan, on Broad Haven), but there is another smaller fort, Dun Fiachra in Aughadoon, north of the Mullet, traditionally said to have been another of their seats. The O'Dowda's reign came to an end, and the Barrets, Burkes, Lynnots, and other Welsh and Anglo-Norman families began to obtain a footing in the country about the beginning of the fourteenth century, and by 1386 seem to have got the sovereignty. They built several castles in the Mullet, of which the remains of only one can now be traced. Their rule was widespread, and many of their descendants are to be met with who still nourish the memory of their ancestors glory. The keeping and defence of Erris was given after the battle of Moyne by *William Mor na Maighare* (William the Great of Moyne)[1] the head of the Barrets, to Toimin and to Philpin, the grandson of Toimin (Duald M'Firbis). The Barrets ruled until the reign of Elizabeth, when some of their property was forfeited, as is thought by O'Donovan, who, however, states that he has no documentary proof.

In the reign of James I. one Darby Cormick bought a large part of this territory, and his descendants ruled until the reign of Charles II., when the land was forfeited. It was somewhere at or before this time that an influx of Ulster Celts into the district took place. These were mainly O'Donnels, O'Reillys, and a few others. Other parts of the district were forfeited during the commonwealth, so that when M'Firbis wrote there was neither Bourke, Barret, nor O'Dowd holding property in Erris. In the reign of Charles II. a grant was made of the whole half barony of Erris, the parish of Doonfeeny, in Tyrawley, and the parish of Tarmonbarry in the county of Roscommon to certain London citizens in charge for Sir James Shaen, Knight and Baronet. Sir Arthur Shaen, son of Sir James, introduced into Erris a Protestant colony who were mainly settled in the Mullet; they were

[1] This battle was fought in 1281, between the Barrets and Cusack who was assisted in the fight by two of the native Irish, Faithleach O'Boyle and Faithleach O'Dowd; it resulted in the defeat of the Barrets.

11: Browne D-5 (1894) 1895
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● 175 given leases and were accompanied by a clergyman of their own persuasion; the only original inhabitants obtaining leases were the Cormicks. This colony does not appear to have made any extensive change in the composition of the population, as the settlers after a time ceased to be agriculturists to any extent, and took the natives of the district on to their lands as tenants. A curious petition to Sir Henry Bingham, Governor of Connaught, in reference to the revenge taken on these settlers by the natives, shows the names of those in the district in the reign of Queen Anne, and of these but two now remain, all the rest having disappeared, a fate which is ascribed by Mr. Knight to the habits of extravagance induced by the nature of their life. Sir Arthur Shaen began the canal across the neck of the Mullet, but soon abandoned the project, which was not revived until after the foundation of the town of Belmullet. Sir Arthur's two daughters, he had no sons, married, one Henry Boyle Carter of Castlemartin, county Kildare, and the other John Bingham Esq., Newbrook, county Mayo, and the property was divided between these two.

In the year 1793 a fight took place in the Mullet between the local yeomanry and the people of the district, in which thirty-six of the latter were slain. The origin of the fight was the opposition to the enrolment of the militia, then causing a great stir in the west of Ireland. Major Bingham having come to reside in the Mullet in 1796 built Bingham Castle at Eley, and began to make some roads and reclaim some of the land. The first road into the district was made in 1823, and about the same period Major Bingham founded the town in the Mullet known as Binghamstown, which at first was fairly prosperous and had at one time a population of 673.

In 1823 the first vehicle entered the Mullet, and in 1824 Mr. W. H. Carter founded the town of Belmullet at the neck of the peninsula. This town being more favourably situated, has completely destroyed its rival Binghamstown, which, though once containing some fine buildings, is now in ruins, and contains only about a dozen inhabited houses. From the time of the establishment of Belmullet and the construction of good roads into the districts, the condition of the people has [511] shown steady improvement, though it is still extremely primitive and poverty-stricken.

VIII.—Concluding Remarks.

174 This report being, like its two predecessors, a record of available facts, as found, in order to form a basis for comparison between different parts of the country, all advocacy of personal theories or opinions

13:Evans K-5 (ca. 1940) 1957
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its old habits, as is illustrated by the persistence of cremation rites from the earliest megalithic phase to the end of the Bronze Age, almost on the threshold of the Christian era.

At some stage towards the close of the Bronze Age the expanding Celtic culture, carried with the sword across western Europe, was able to gain a foothold in the north-east, whence in time it imposed itself and its language on the whole of Ireland and later, by way of Argyll, on Scotland too. But the price of this conquest was the loss of many elements of Celtic culture or their adaptation to the Irish environment and to long-established native tradition. The art of the Celtic overlords, for example, quickly develops forms and features which are insular and distinctively Irish. In other words there is more continuity of folk ways throughout the prehistoric period in Ireland than in Britain. And this Irish-Celtic civilization of the Early Iron Age was able, during the following period, to maintain itself through the centuries when the Roman Empire embraced nearly all western Europe. The spirit of its art and life was almost untouched by the mass-production and standardization of imperial Rome. It survived long enough to be caught up and revitalized in the late Celtic phase by the fervour of a Christian faith whose adaptation to Celtic tradition is illustrated in Saint Columba's famous phrase: 'Christ is my druid'. It was a time of great missionary enterprise, but at home its greatest achievement was the taming of the damp lowland forests which earlier peoples had shunned. Legendary history, now receiving confirmation from archaeological research, tells of technological advances and increasing population and settlement from about the seventh century onwards.

Irish Christianity grew up within the forms of Irish life: the church claimed no martyrs and there is little evidence of conflict with older beliefs, which clearly were absorbed. The Celtic church was peculiar in that the centres of its life were the great monasteries: there were no cities to form the seats of powerful bishops. Instead, the founders' kin retained the ownership of the monasteries, and the Celtic tradition survived in administration as in art and architecture. It was only after the ravages of the Vikings and the reassertion of pagan cults that the Irish Church was reformed by Saint Malachy, who established

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175 [795] a system of dioceses and raised St. Patrick's Church at Armagh to the primacy in the eleventh century.

175 162 But it was the Norsemen who established the first port-cities of Ireland—Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Limerick—and provided the Anglo-Normans with bases from which to attempt their conquest. It was the fate of these newcomers, as of earlier invaders, to be absorbed, but the towns which they and their successors established became the instruments of Anglicization. Yet outside the nine south-eastern counties where the Anglo-Norman influence was strongest, there are few towns which are older than the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and as late as 1841 less than 15 per cent of the Irish population was urban. It is significant that even today no inland Irish town has a population reaching 20,000: in the Republic, indeed, only one or two exceed 10,000, and that barely. It is the immemorial peasant tradition which dominates the heart of Ireland. In some inland counties the rural population is still as much as 90 per cent of the total: for the Republic of Ireland as a whole it amounts to 62 per cent, and the figure for the more industrialized counties of Northern Ireland is only slightly under 50 per cent. In Ulster the plantation of English and especially of Scots Presbyterian settlers in the seventeenth century was at last successful in maintaining its identity, though as we shall see the material culture is strongly moulded to its Irish environment. Partly because this region of entry has received through the centuries almost every culture-layer that has been deposited in Ireland, there is perhaps a greater variety of survivals in Ulster than in any other part of Ireland. In some ways this most British part of Ireland is also the most Irish.

311 361 175 Although the tribal nomadism of medieval Ireland has been exaggerated, there can be no doubt that the pastoral tradition has dominated Irish life through the ages. Cultivation was certainly practised from Neolithic times, but the older crops, wheat and barley, were in course of time supplemented and in many parts replaced by oats, which became the corn of Ireland as of Scotland, food for men as well as animals. For half the year the arable land was under stubble, pastured and manured by grazing stock, so that the favoured acres around the settle-

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ment—the infield—might produce grain year after year. The rough grazing beyond—the outfield—was broken up periodically in temporary enclosures, and it may be assumed that such a system had developed from the shifting agriculture of prehistoric times. Relics of outfield cultivation, usually in association with family-communes, can be traced in many regions of difficulty throughout Western Europe, both in the mountains of the centre and along the oceanic fringe from Spain to Norway. 'If we knew medieval England completely', states Sir John Clapham, 'we should find plenty of it.'[1] In most lowland areas of good soil throughout western Europe, however, it was replaced by a system involving large open fields, normally three in number, each of which was used in rotation for autumn sown corn, usually wheat, followed by spring corn and fallow. This scheme called for considerable organization and a large variety of tools and implements: it came to be governed by complex regulations and controlled by the lord of the manor, and it is significant that the feudal system and in due course the nation-state evolved in areas where the openfield economy was practised. There was more freedom and flexibility in the smaller and simpler outfield system, and in Ireland the feudal order was successfully established only in the English Pale, where the three-field system was introduced by Anglo-Norman settlers. Elsewhere the tribal system prevailed, and for the study of folk-customs the important unit within that system was the family commune living in clustered house-groups, hamlets or clachans. The prevailing cattle-economy called for a minimum of equipment, the subordinate cultivation little more than spades or light ploughs and hand-operated tools. Even the lowliest members of society had some interest in the land and its cultivation was not beyond their means. Possession of a cow, a horse, a pig or a few sheep demanded even less in the way of equipment and tools. The simple arts and crafts of prehistoric times proved adequate, and the poorest man was able to play his part in the community and stand on his own feet. A democratic

[1]H. J. Clapham, *A Concise Economic History of Britain* (1949), 48. Similarly Gilbert Slater, *The English Peasantry and the Enclosure of Common Fields* (1907) regards what he terms the Celtic system 'as influencing to varying degrees the type of village community in England.'

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way of life was fostered by the ease with which the humbler members of the community could compete with others in arts demanding not wealth but personal qualities, in poetry, oratory, song and physical prowess. Down to our own day the small size of the average farm has encouraged the survival of simple tools and limited the acquisition of machines. Subdivision of farms and the depressing effects of short leases and absenteeism were contributory factors. Subdivision of holdings was prohibited under an Act of 1881, but like so many other prohibited practices it did not cease.

The retention of many of the attributes of a peasant society is the key to the survival of the folk ways with which we are concerned in the following chapters. Even the Great Famine which marks a grim watershed in social and economic history did not entirely obliterate them, though it had such far-reaching effects that it might be regarded as the end of prehistoric times in Ireland. First in importance is the strength of blood-ties in extended family groups, still maintained even in many urban communities. During the air raids on Belfast, for example, the problem of finding billets for evacuated homeless was complicated by the refusal of large groups of related families to be separated from each other. In remote rural areas the blood-tie is a dominant force, governing economic as well as social relationships,[1] its loyalties overriding the impartial administration of justice. A relative is a 'friend', even if 'far-out'—that is, remotely connected—and friendship is a matter of blood relationship. A peasant community is concerned first and foremost with the maintenance and continuity of society: it does not judge—and cannot be judged—purely by economic standards. Immemorially peasant families have been large, and childbearing is widely regarded as part of the ritual necessary to bring success with the stock and the crops. In rural Ireland barrenness in a wife still tends to be regarded as an unnatural and disgraceful thing, and many superstitious cures for 'the sterile curse' are recorded. This is but one example of a widespread attitude towards life, to which comparative anthropology offers many parallels. Sympathetic magic, or the performance

[1] C. M. Arensberg and S. T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (1940), Ch. 13.

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491 493 when the making and repair of 'cross roads' became a public charge it was done on the basis of baronies, and the Grand Juries—composed largely of landlords—became responsible, under the presentment system, for local road-making and repairing. Thus from about 1760 onwards a fairly close network of roads began to be established in the richer parts of the country—especially about the big demesnes—and the way was open for the more capacious spoke-wheeled cart which held its own until in our own day it is being replaced by the lorry and the tractor-trailer.

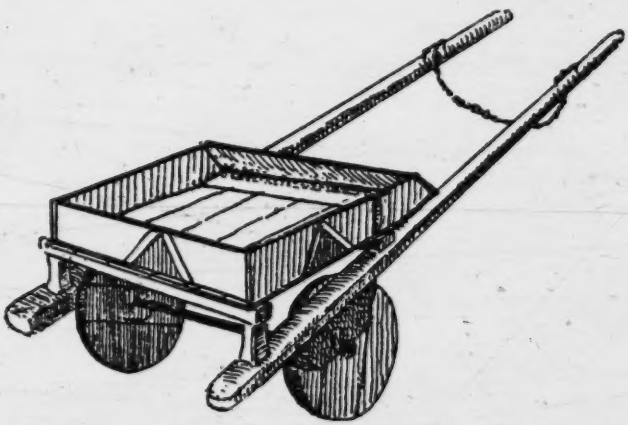

FIG. 55. Wheel-car, Co. Antrim.

175 493 In the face of abundant evidence as to the backwardness of rural transport and the rarity of wheeled vehicles and made roads until quite recent times, it is startling to read of the prominence of chariotry and of the rapid movement of armies in the Irish legendary histories. In fact, up to date, the archaeological evidence which would clearly establish the use of chariots in early Celtic Ireland is scanty. There can be little doubt, however, that horse-drawn spoke-wheeled vehicles were a significant element in Celtic culture, and it is known that the Romans took into their language nearly a dozen Celtic names for horse-drawn vehicles.[1] Such fragments of harness as have been re-

[492]

[1] E. M. Jope, *U.J.A.*, 13 (1950), 57–60.

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covered from early Celtic sites in Ireland suggest that the horse was held in high regard and was perhaps reserved for pageants, combats and ceremonies. The detailed evidence in the legendary histories of ancient Ireland for the existence of roads, however, is clear. The fact that the Celtic roads are rarely traceable today is understandable in view of the physical conditions of the country, especially the prevalence of obliterating bogs. Moreover the road system must have decayed with the decline of Celtic culture. In any case it is evident that the use of the chariot was confined to the highest castes, and that its humble relation the block-wheeled car was fated to outlast it. The finely-spoked wheeled vehicles of the Celtic invaders were as much out of place in Ireland as the great wagons which later overlords introduced from England. The block-wheeled car, if not previously known in Ireland, may have been the native response to the impressive magic of the Celtic wheel, or it may have reached this country with Celtic camp-followers. We shall see that it could have been developed from the slide-car which almost certainly preceded it in Europe. The term 'wheel-car' as used in Ireland refers to the block-wheeled car and is clearly meant to distinguish it from the wheel-less slide-car. The spoke-wheeled cart is a newcomer in most parts. Nevertheless there is evidence that a light spoke wheeled cart continued to be used in early Christian times: an example drawn chariot-wise by two horses is figured on the eighth century Ahenny Cross in Co. Tipperary. It seems that such light carts were used for personal transport, for example St. Sampson took one with him, according to an eleventh-century account of his travels, to carry his books across Cornwall on his way from Ireland to Brittany.[1] And the spoke-wheeled cart must have been known in the planted areas since the Middle Ages, so that it is very probable that in parts of the country the cart has had a continuous life since early Celtic times.

But we should first examine certain archaic methods of transport which depend on the carrying power of beasts and men, or rather women, for in simple societies the bearers of children are also the burden-bearers. The romance of rural

[1] O. G. S. Crawford, 'Western Seaways' in *Custom is King* (1936), 196.

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103 banshees (see below). Knockaunamoughilly is named from a "Boughil," and other "sham men" appear at the Farbreagas
173 in Cloontra and Cloongaheen. Seefin in Kilseily is another "seat of Finn." Some names are more doubtful. Lough Graney, the river Graney, and Tomgraney, are attributed to a suspicious solar heroine, the lady "Gillagreine" or "Grainne of the bright cheeks."

II. *Banshees.*

173 Above the Shannon gorge, overlooking a beautiful mass of
776 mountains, the southern arm of Lough Derg, and the river and Killaloe with its weirs, rises the great brown and purple bluff
133 of Craglea. Above the low earthworks and mound of stones
[172] that mark the ninth-century fort of Prince Lachtna ascends a rough lane. Further up on the east flank a little well, Tobereevul, gushes out from under a low rock amid the ferns,[19] and on the west side,—up a lonely valley, a long-forgotten battlefield, "Crag Liath where shields were cleft," in one of Brian Boru's earlier combats with the Norsemen,—rises a high crag called Craganeevul. The names of both well and crag commemorate the tutelary spirit of the House of Cass, Aibhill or, more correctly, Aibhinn, "the lovely one," once, it may be, the goddess of the House.

● 175 On Good Friday, A.D. 1014, Brian, the aged monarch of all
776 Erin, knelt in his tent praying for victory, while the battle raged over the low ridge now crowded by the houses of northern Dublin and on to the weirs of Clontarf. News came that his brave son's standard had fallen, and his page entreated him to ride back to the camp. "Oh, God! thou boy," cried Brian, "retreat becomes us not, and I myself know that I shall not depart alive, for Aibhill of Crag Liath came to me last night, and she told me that I should be killed today."[20] How many centuries of faith lay behind the king's fatalism, who can say? As the Gauls worshipped another banshee, Catabodva,

[19] It still exists, though marked only "site of" in the new Ordnance Survey maps.

[20] *Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill* (Ed. Dr. Todd, Rolls Series).

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as their war-goddess,[21] so, before the baptism of King Cairthinn, (first Christian Prince of his House, about A.D. 430), the ancestors of the Dalcassians may have worshipped Aibhinn on her holy hill, and her equally lovely sister Aine, crowned with meadowsweet, on the tamer mound of Knockaney. Whether, if so, they found her already enthroned at Craglea on their conquest of the district, or whether the conqueror Lugad consecrated the mountains to his patroness, it is now impossible to guess. Aibhill, as banshee, held her own. We find her even usurping the place of the "Sybil" in a translation of the *Dies Iræ*,[22] in unwonted companionship with King David, and she was a commonplace of local threnodies during the eighteenth, and even the nineteenth, century. In the lake below Rathblamaic in Inchiquin she has down to recent years been seen, with the twenty-five other banshees of Clare that call her their queen, washing clothes before any impending disaster.[1]

The next appearance of a banshee in local history is of a very different spirit three centuries later. The *Cathreim Thoirdhealbhaigh* ("Triumphs of Torlough") was written probably about A.D. 1350 by Seean mac Craith, the hereditary historian.[23] It contains accounts of three spirit women,—one, the "Sovereignty of Erin," being of surpassing loveliness, and the two others, (if not the same,—"Dismal" and "Water Dismal"), of loathsome hideousness. The hags, however, probably survive, while the "Sovereignty" has perished. Bronach ("the sorrowful or dismal one") of Ceann Boirne was known as the "Hag of Black Head" from the modern name of the older Ceann (or Rinn) of Burren. She was in full repute in 1839, and I have heard of her vaguely about 1885 or 1887. In August, 1317, she

[21] Cf. *Revue Archéologique*, N.S., vol. xviii. (1868), p. 1; Sir Samuel Ferguson's paper, from the Irish point of view, in *Dublin University Magazine*, Oct. 1834, p. 463; W. M. Hennessy, "The War Goddess of the Ancient Irish," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. x., p. 425.

[22] Mss., Royal Irish Academy, 23.M.47.

[23] As yet only in manuscript,—one copy of A.D. 1509, and another probably from one of 1449. For its age see *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. xxxii., p. 139.

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175 776 763 was able to appear in "the dark before sunrise" and foretell destruction by words and hideous action. The supporters of Prince Murchad O'Brien, (then absent in Dublin), under his brother Dermot invaded the territory of his rival Prince Donchad O'Brien. The latter got together an army, "even the man in a souterrain (*uamh*) of a fort" being summoned, and marched round the site of the modern village of Ballyvaughan, his foe having sheltered in Corcomroe Abbey, in a nook of the bare hills some miles to the north-west. Approaching Lough Rasga, (still known as Rask), "they looked on the shining mere, and there they saw the monstrous and distorted form of a lone, ancient hag, that stooped over the bright Lough shore. She was thatched with elf locks, foxy grey and rough like heather, matted and like long sea-wrack, a bossy, wrinkled, ulcerated brow, the hairs of her eyebrows like fish hooks; bleared, watery eyes peered with malignant fire between red inflamed lids; she had a great blue nose, flattened and wide, livid lips, and a stubbly beard."[24] The writer adds detail on detail (some 90 in all), many too disgusting to copy. The hag was washing human limbs and heads with gory weapons and clothes, till all the lake was defiled with blood, brains, and floating hair. Donchad at last spoke. "What is your name and race, and whose kin are those maltreated dead?" She replied,—"I am Bronach of Burren, of the Tuatha Dé Danann. This slaughter heap is of your army's heads; your own is in the middle." The angry men raised their javelins, but she rose on the wind, yelling more and more words of woe till she vanished. "Heed her not," said Donchad, "she is a friendly *Bodbh* of Clan Torlough" (his opponents). The army hurried on to the ridge of the Abbey, where Donchad and all his kindred, save one brother, were slain before evening.

Not to the Irish alone did the banshee foretell ruin. In May, 1318, Richard de Clare, leader of the Normans, was marching to what he supposed would be an easy victory over the O'Deas of Dysert. The English came to the "glittering, running water of fish-containing Fergus," when they saw a horrible beldam

[24] I have to thank Mr. Standish Hayes O'Grady for this and other extracts from the work, the translations in the library of the Royal Irish Academy being, (it is understood), very crude.

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washing armour and rich robes till the red gore churned and splashed through her hands.[35] Calling an Irish ally to question her, De Clare heard that "the armour and clothes were of the English, and few would escape immolation." "I am the Water Doleful One. I lodge in the green fairy mounds (*sidh*) of the land, but I am of the Tribes of Hell. Thither I invite you. Soon we shall be dwellers in one country." Next day De Clare, his son, and nearly all his English troops lay dead upon the fields near the ford of Dysert for miles over the country in their flight.

The belief of the early eleventh and fourteenth centuries is still extant, for local legend near Dysert tells how Aibhill and twenty-five banshees washed blood-stained clothes in Rath Lake before "Claraghmore" (De Clare) fell, and that they still do so when mischief is afoot.[36]

For nearly 300 years there is no other Clare banshee tale, till the famous one of 1642 in the *Memoires of Lady Fanshawe*, (published in 1665).[37] It is so well known that a brief abstract will suffice. Her Ladyship, staying with some of the O'Briens, was sleeping in a room, of which the window overhung water at some height, at a castle, perhaps Bunratty or Castle Lake. She was awakened by a horrible scream, and saw a girl outside the window. The apparition was pale, rather handsome, and with her reddish hair hanging dishevelled over her shoulders. After some time the unwelcome visitor vanished, with other ghastly shrieks. In the morning Lady Fanshawe, telling her tale, was told of the death of a relative of the family whose illness had been concealed from her. The spirit was that of the peasant wife of a former owner of the castle, drowned in the moat by her husband and of evil omen to his descendants.

The next story was told in my own family and, I understand, in that of the Ross Lewins. I have traced it to a daughter of Jane Ross Lewin, one of the girls who saw the banshee. It related to Jane's father, Harrison Ross Lewin of Fortfergus, who probably died in 1776, as his will, dated November, 1775, was proved in

[35] Another "washer of the ford" appears in "Da Choca's Hostel," *Revue Celtique*, vol. xxi. (1900), p. 157, and she is also a Bodbh.

[36] Told me by Prof. Brian O'Looney in 1890, and I have heard more recently of the existence of the belief.

[37] *Loc. cit.*, pp. 83-6.

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March, 1777; but I have hitherto been unable to verify the circumstances or place of his death. Mr. Ross Lewin had gone to Dublin on business, the journey at that time taking five days, and the several stages being Limerick, Nenagh, Mountrath, Kildare, and Dublin. In his absence the "young people" went to a friend's house for the evening. The road passed an old church (Kilchrist), which was unenclosed, standing in an open field. As the party returned under bright moonlight, they were startled by loud keening and wailing from the direction of the ruin. Coming in sight, all clearly saw a little old woman with long white hair and a black cloak running to and fro on the top of the side wall, clapping her hands and wailing. The young men, leaving the girls together on the road, sent some of their number to watch each end of the building, and the remainder entered and climbed up on the wall. The apparition vanished as they approached the church, and, after a careful search, could not be found. The party, thoroughly frightened, hurried home, and found their mother in even greater terror. She had been sitting in the window when a great raven flapped three times at the glass, and, while she told them, the bird again flew against the window. Some days later, news arrived from Dublin that Ross Lewin had died suddenly on the very evening of the apparition and omen.

It is curious that an English family, no matter how long settled in Ireland, should have acquired the ministration of a banshee, but, besides the Ross Lewins, both the Stamers and the Westropps were so endowed in Clare.[28] The Westropps had also death warnings in the shape of a white owl and the headless coach. This bird last appeared, it is said, before a death in 1909, but it would be more convincing if it appeared at places where the white owl does *not* nest and fly out every night. The banshee has been conspicuously absent of late years, although on the death of my father, the

[28] Among families with banshees, Thomas Crofton Croker (*op. cit.*, ed. 1862, p. 115,) names old Englishry such as the Burkes, Rices, Haseys (the Norman, not the Gaelic, name), Trants, and Kestings. The FitzGeralds of Kerry and Limerick had also a banshee. Of the Clare families the Westropps came from Yorkshire, the Stamers from Essex, and the Lewins probably from Durham. Some banshees may have been acquired by marriage, for the three latter families were related to O'Briens, MacNamaras, and O'Gradys, to name only a part of their Celtic connections.

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COLLECTANEA.

A Folklore Survey of County Clare (*continued*).

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In a preceding article I have dealt with place names and legends of names, banshees, the death coach, and fairies, and in the present one I propose to deal mainly with other appearances of a spectral or spiritual character. In doing this it is necessary carefully to avoid attributing to older writers beliefs which they never held. It is more than probable that the writer of the *Wars of the Gaedhil with the Gaill*, and Seean MacCraith, the author of the *Triumphs of Torlough*, were no more under a delusion when they personified the spirits of Valour, Bloodshed, Terror, and Sovereignty than the modern journalist who writes of "Public Opinion sitting in judgment," or the "Spirit of Loyalty attending King George." The first ancient writer, describing the terrors of the deadly combat of the Irish and the Norse in 1014, tells us that there was "a bird of valour and championship fluttering over Murchad's head and flying on his breath." He also tells how there flew a dark, merciless, (and many more adjective-endowed) *bodbh*, screaming and fluttering over the combatants, while "the satyrs (*bannanaig*), the idiots, the maniacs of the glens, the witches, the goblins, the ancient birds, the destroying demons of the air and sky, and the feeble demonic phantom host" arose to accompany the warriors in the combat. He probably meant little more than "Amazement in the van and Flight combined with Sorrow's faded form and Solitude behind," though possibly the various uncanny "creatures of the wild" were real to him in their proper places in the hills and glens, but not in daylight on the fields beside Dublin. The second writer (*circa*

[p.200]

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1350) describes King Torlough, about 1286, returning from a successful raid, which has left its mark very clearly on the legal rolls of the day, ravaging the English lands round the mountains of eastern County Limerick and northern Tipperary, and marching up the western (Clare) shore of Lough Derg. A lovely maiden appeared, "modest, strange in aspect, glorious in form, rosy-lipped, soft-taper-handed, pliant-wavy-haired, white-bosomed." She was the "Sovereignty of Erin" come to rebuke the chief for letting De Burgh dissuade him from attempting the reconquest of all Ireland, and vanished in a lustrous cloud. The author's intent here is unmistakable. MacCraith has one other passage, so suggestive and remarkable that it can only be regarded as a literal statement of the beliefs of the warriors at the burial of some of whom his father, Ruadri, presided, a few years later, in 1317. Donchad, a prince of the Clan Torlough line, aided by William de Burgh, gave his deadly enemy, Richard de Clare, a severe defeat near Bunratty in 1311. At the moment of victory De Burgh was captured by the foe, and the victors fled in indescribable confusion,—the English to their nearest castles, and the Irish to their stone strongholds, the great terraced mountains of Burren. De Clare and his protegé, Prince Dermot, camped on two ridges at Cruchwill and Tullycommaun, a long ridge capped with tumuli, dolmens, and "forts." Donchad lay across the valley and lake on the spurs of Slieve Carran opposite. The soldiers of Donchad, we are told, "were disturbed by phantoms and delusive dreams, lights shone on the fairy forts," the waves of Erin[1] groaned, "the deep plaint resounded from the woods and streams," shades were seen, and hollow groans were heard. This is evidently a true tale of the reminiscences of the depressed and anxious men who lay looking at the foes' camp fires opposite. I have often heard with wonder on these lonely hills

> "undescribed sounds
> That come a swooning over hollow grounds
> And wither drearily on barren moors,"

the noise of the winds in the rocks and bushes, the strange prattle of streams in crannies deep down in the rocks, the cry of night

[1] Misfortune was foretold by great waves at four spots on the Irish coast, to which later belief added a fifth at Malbay in Clare.

14: Westropp B-4, 5 (no date)1910-12
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178 fires have been more numerous. Formerly bones were saved up
746 to crackle as they burnt in the fires, and even when this ceased
the pronunciation "bone-fire" continued. Magical rites con-
[789] nected with milk and butter were, very recently, performed
secretly at wells on May Eve (April 30th) as described later.

526 Other annual observances were sports which first included, and
then lapsed into, mere races. The *iraghts*, or gatherings, at the
527 mound and inauguration place of Moy Eir (Magh Adhair) lasted
down to 1838, and were still very faintly remembered by old
● 175 people in 1890 as having died out in the Famine years, with so
much of the social brightness of the people. I may note that this
place,—the reputed seat of Adhar, a Firbolg prince, about the
beginning of our era,—became the place of inauguration of the
native princes of Thomond from before 877, and continued so
down, at least, to 1570. The name Magh Adhair (pl[illegible]ally
Moy Eir) at first covered the whole central plain of east Clare, but
steadily shrank to that of a small tribal territory, and then, in
1584 and 1655, to the two townlands of Corbally and Toonagh
(Tuanagh-moyree). By 1838 it was attached only to two fields,—
"Moyross, or Moyree, parks,"—in the former, and is now confined
to a single field, "Moyars Park," and to the "rath" or mound
in Toonagh, across the brook. Notices of the inaugurations are
numerous from 1275 to 1311, and occur sporadically from 877
onwards. Other and less famous gatherings were at Creganenagh
("Fair or Assembly Crag")[8] on the bare hill over Termon in the
Burren, and at a field in Caherminaun near Kilfenora. The latter
probably gave the name Ballykinvarga, (Baile-cinn-mharghaidh in
1380), *i.e.* "head of the market," to the adjacent townland, and
may have been connected with the remarkable ring wall, girt with
a wide abattis of pillar stones, not far distant. Some forgotten
assembly is commemorated at Eanty ("Fairs" or "gatherings")
in the east of Burren. Other assemblages will be dealt with later
under XVI. *Patterns.*

XV. *Wells and Well Customs.*

823 Hesitation in questioning poor people too closely about their
religious feelings and rites has, I fear, rendered my notes on this

[8] Aenach was not merely a fair, but an assembly for merrymaking, consultation, etc.

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16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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turies afterward, and still do in modified form, and became embodied in the medieval culture which was shaped by internal innovation and borrowing from other European traditions. Christianity came to Inis Beag in the early decades of the sixth century. Inis Beag and the other islands in the vicinity became one of the famous monastic centers of Ireland, where over a hundred saints lived or paid extended visits. Among them were St. Enda of the Aran Islands, St. Columbkille who was to Christianize Scotland and much of England, St. Kieran the founder of Clonmacnoise, St. Brendan the Navigator who according to Irish legend reached the coast of Florida in 551, and St. Kevin the founder of Glendalough. Among the principal medieval Christian monuments in Inis Beag are three churches, one and possibly two monasteries, several tombs, and a sacred well.

Only a single female saint is associated with Inis Beag, and a church in her honor stands on the northwest side of the island. Although not the first church on the site, the present building was erected not later than the ninth century, and west of its doorway under a cliff is the foundation of a *clochán* in which the officiating clergyman may have resided. South of the church are a number of ancient tombs, and in a small valley east of it a layer of midden lies beneath manufactured soil. The axe heads were unearthed in the valley only a stone's throw from the church.

Built in the tenth century to honor the patron saint of the island, a second church is located atop a terrace overlooking the beach on the northeast side of Inis Beag. It was used as the regular place of worship until about 1840, when sand began to accumulate about it; at that time, the island cemetery was on a slight hill west of the church, but as the sand grew deeper burials were made next to the church, eventually to form the present cemetery which rings the building almost completely. The tomb of the patron saint stands on the surface of the terrace a short distance from the church, but it and the building nearly to the top of its gables are buried in the sand (see Fig. 3). Each year on June 14th island men dig out the interior of the church and bare the tomb to commemorate the saint. A huge midden, partially covered with sand and solidified to a conglomerate below its surface, is banked against the terrace on the north and measures 20 feet in depth, 150 feet in width, and 450 feet in length. It represents the accumulation of hundreds of years, and possibly thousands if pagan structures antedated Christian ones.

A third church lies buried beneath the sand close to the east end of the beach, and is named after another saint who is believed to be interred near it. Only legend supports its existence, for there is no reference to its unencumbered appearance in the writings of the earliest visitors in the mid-seventeenth century. However, funeral processions bound from the present church to the cemetery leave the main trail to follow what is apparently an archaic predecessor deep in the sand, and at one point the coffin is lowered and the mourners kneel and pray for the soul of the deceased at the place where tradition asserts that the ancient church lies. This custom is disconcerting to the newly appointed or visiting priest, who sometimes when leading a funeral procession will continue on the modern path while the islanders desert him to obey a centuries old prescription.

On the west side of Inis Beag, near the shore, are located a holy well named after a saint and the *clochán* in which he supposedly dwelled during a lengthy stay

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Figure 3. Church of the patron saint and the cemetery

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778 on the island during the early part of the sixth century. A low wall with two openings has been constructed about the spring, and it is visited frequently by those wishing to obtain water or to pray. I was told by the owners of surrounding fields that when they were children many gallery grave tombs stood in the area, but most of these were removed when the fields first were improved and seeded. Most islanders will not molest prehistoric and medieval monuments, especially those that they believe are burial places, out of reverence for the dead or fear of the ghosts or fairies who reside within them; but down the centuries, such structures gradually have disappeared by being torn down to satisfy building and farming needs. It is the emphatic claim of the folk that the sacred well was created miraculously by the visiting saint and has never dried up, but two unbiased observers reported to me that they had seen it waterless during especially dry summers.

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721 At least twice during the Middle Ages Inis Beag was laid waste by invading forces: first by Vikings in 1081 (and maybe on other occasions between the ninth and eleventh centuries, when much of Ireland came under the control of Norwegians and Danes), and then in 1334 by Sir John Darcy, the Lord Justice of Ireland, who with a large fleet and army sailed around the Irish coast implementing British rule. The islanders believe that Inis Beag was completely depopulated by the Vikings and possibly by the Darcy expedition, and again by wars once, and maybe twice, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Modern Period (1500 to 1900)

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712 The castle in Inis Beag built within the Celtic promontory fort, probably erected in the sixteenth century by the mainland family who owned the island,

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is a three-story tower house with its south and west walls partially destroyed. The middle story of the castle rests on vaults, and there are carved corbels projecting from the north and east walls. It is believed that the castle was assaulted in 1652 from the land side by Cromwellian troops, who disembarked at the back of the island and hauled their heavy cannons across the limestone pavement, unimpeded by the stone fences which stand today, to the monastery above the tower.

Queen Elizabeth annexed Inis Beag for the Crown in 1586 because of its strategic position, after two contending Irish families had appealed to her following their fierce battle for its possession, in which all of the folk may have been slaughtered. From 1586 until the first decade of the eighteenth century, Commonwealth, Loyalist, and Williamite forces were stationed in Inis Beag most of the time, and until 1886, when obtained by the Irish Land Commission, the island was owned by a succession of absentee Anglo-Irish landlords. When Cromwellian troops forced the surrender of Loyalists in 1652, the population of Inis Beag once again may have been decimated, although one legend holds that only males were put to the sword. The island after 1655 became a port for transshipment of clerics who were exiled to the West Indies. This was the time when Cromwell revenged himself on Irish Catholics and their Protestant allies by appropriating for his followers more than half of the Irish soil and leveling harsh political, commercial, and religious penalties. Thousands of priests were banished, including all of the bishops for a time, in his crusade.

It was after the Restoration in 1660 that the land of Inis Beag was divided into quarters, half-quarters, and smaller units and assigned to families. My genealogical research reveals that all of the families of Inis Beag trace descent from immigrants who arrived in the island during and after the last half of the seventeenth century. The early arrivals, as well as any survivors, may have intermarried and interbred with soldiers posted in the island, for anthropometric and blood group analyses (buttressed by surname and historical evidence and local legend) show that the folk more closely resemble the northern English than they do their mainland cousins. A Dublin humor magazine featured a cartoon, not favored in nativistic quarters, showing Inis Beag men in traditional attire playing cricket.

The islanders still express considerable bitterness over the conditions of poverty and servitude experienced by their ancestors during the 300 years that they lived under alien landlords. All of the excesses of foreign domination suffered by mainland peasants were suffered by Inis Beag folk, but were aggravated by the ordinary hardships of island living. Little is known of local events in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, until the island was "rediscovered" by Petrie and O'Flaherty. There was trading between Inis Beag and communities along the mainland coast for many miles, and ships passing by often dropped anchor at the island; but at that time this region of Ireland was very much isolated and seldom visited. A military garrison once again was established in Inis Beag for a brief period during the Napoleonic Wars, when the English feared an invasion of the British Isles from the west by French forces. A watch tower was constructed on the island, one of a chain along the Atlantic coast of Ireland, to give early warning of invasion.

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175 [712] [698] The castle and watch tower still dominate the Inis Beag skyline, and the latter serves as a landmark for fishermen posting their nets. Another landmark, at the southeast tip of the island, is a 110-feet-high lighthouse built during the 1850s.

176 173 731 244 Written sources and local traditions disagree as to the effects of the great famine on Inis Beag. Some observers claim that the potato blight completely destroyed island crops, and the folk were forced to depend on secondary agricultural commodities, livestock, fish, and limpets in order to survive; conversely, others maintain that the blight did not penetrate the island until much later. According to my Inis Beag respondents, the blight did contaminate some gardens, but enough [457] were spared so that the islanders were not greatly inconvenienced. In fact, potatoes [161] were exported by some farmers to help feed starving mainlanders. Between 1841 and 1851, the population of Inis Beag increased by 62 persons, at a time when [167] most other Irish communities had dwindling populations. The first record of substantial emigration from the island, mostly to the United States, was in 1822.

Contemporary Setting

131 Inis Beag has a northeast to southwest topographical axis, at right angles to its geological axis, and is a mile and three-quarters in length and a quarter of a [161] mile less in width. A population of 350 persons inhabits four villages, and the [361] island comprises 1440 acres. When giving directions informally, the folk refer to [823] the beach side as the north side and the back of the island bordering the Atlantic as the south side; then, the sound separating Inis Beag from Inis Thiar becomes the west side, and the sound between Inis Beag and the mainland the east side. I will follow this practice when describing various geographical and other features 133 in this chapter. Between the mainland and Inis Beag, a reef extending from the island far out into the east sound is a menace to shipping; it was on this reef within 200 yards of the shore that the freighter ran aground in 1960.

133 311 A large beach and a contiguous stretch of common land, which together make up over 200 of the island's 1440 acres, dominate the north side of Inis Beag. The beach is known as the "strand," following English usage, and lies west and north of the common land, about midway between the sounds (see Figs. 4, 9, and 10). It is thought that several hundred years ago arable land existed where the common land does today, and the strand was very narrow; but gradually sand accumulated, widening the beach and burying more and more farm land as it crept eastward. If one examines the Ordnance Survey Maps of 1841 and 1902, the slow encroachment of the sand can be noted. The common land was about half its present size in 1841, and 60 years later almost 70 acres of cultivable soil had been engulfed. The tops of fences projecting above the surface at the present time attest to the shifting of the sand, as does the buried church of the patron saint, and sand now threatens fertile plots on the east side of the island.

[361] There are six major and several minor terraces in Inis Beag, of which the lower two underlie the strand, the common land, and two of the four villages. The lower terraces are broad and the upper ones narrow and precipitous, while weather-

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skillful fence makers, and many incorporate various designs into their handiwork by using stones of different sizes and shapes. Stiles or openings in the fences connect a few fields, but gates seldom are employed; a man simply breaks down a stretch of fence to allow a horse or a cow to enter a pasture, then quickly rebuilds the fence. The outsider who believes this to be an easy task usually ends up with surplus stones, a disfigured fence, and maybe bruised fingers when he attempts to emulate the custom.

The hundreds of fields are located in dozens of land areas which bear names. Most writers assert that each plot has its own name, but in reality numerous fields are located in any one area. Thus, a man might send his son to dig potatoes in Garden of the Cobbler, that is, in the plot that he owns there; another man might go to milk a cow in his pasture in Garden of the Cobbler. A field will be assigned a new name only if its owner has another one in the same area, and then he might instead call it, for instance, New Field in the Garden of the Cobbler. Some land areas bear the names of persons and animals, others refer to geographical phenomena, while a few are linked to long forgotten historical events.

Over 50 coastal features also are named, from the Harbor of the Churchyard on the north, to Point of the Periwinkles on the south. Most of the place-names refer to rocks, flags, points, reefs, clefts, coves, channels, pools, low cliffs, events of the past, and small strands which mostly have disappeared. The freighter ran aground on a stony reef named Strand of the Sheep. This was a source of wry amusement to the rescued crew, but at one time the beach provided safe footing for sheep driven there to be washed before shearing or sale. One of the best known features is Piper's Rock, which figures prominently in legend. It is named after an island musician who long ago entered a cave above Terrace Village, which supposedly travels under the west sound and connects with another in Inis Thiar, and who never emerged again. In later years, bagpipe music was heard issuing forth from beneath the sea off the rock now named after the luckless fellow.

Inis Beag has four landing places for small craft along its shores, but none are large enough to accommodate the 550-ton government operated "steamer," which visits the island two to four times weekly. The main pier, also called the jetty, is 300 feet long and 15 feet wide and is protected on its windward side by a wall five feet high. Located just west of the strand (see Fig. 9), it is the third structure to occupy the site; the first pier was built in 1878 and the second in 1913, and the present one is an enlargement of its predecessor. Smaller piers are situated east of the lake, to provide Terrace Village access to the sea, and near the lighthouse. The former is used mostly to unload peat, or "turf," imported by hooker from the mainland and to carry passengers to and from the steamer, and the latter only to transfer supplies from Irish Lights Service vessels which anchor in the east sound. A slip on the west sound near Low Village is used by crews rowing between Inis Beag and Inis Thiar in their canoes. When tourists come ashore in the island, they usually do so for the thrill of riding the *curach* and viewing the more accessible historical sites and the much publicized folk; they remain only the hour or two that the steamer is anchored off the strand. Inis Beag has had regular steamer service since 1891, and before that time small sailing boats plied irregularly between island and mainland.

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2

The Land and the Sea

Standard of Living

THE STANDARD OF LIVING of the folk has improved vastly since the establishment of the Irish Land Commission in 1881 and the Congested Districts Board ten years later, and the islanders are better off today than the inhabitants of some other areas of the Gaeltacht. In 1891, the Congested Districts were delineated as regions in which the population did not possess sufficient land to maintain life except at an extremely low standard. Between that year and 1951, the population in the districts declined 42 percent—from 541,000 to 367,000 persons. The few areas which would rank as congested now, on the 1891 basis, are mainly in Cos. Donegal, Mayo, and Galway (Freeman 1960:121–123). A vigorous and continuing effort to stem the tide of emigration, in part caused by poverty, led the commission, the board, subsequently the Gaeltacht Eireann which replaced the board after 1925, and other government agencies appointed in this century, to improve the standard of living by various actions: the enlargement of land holdings for more effective farming, the encouragement of small factory and domestic industries, the improvement of fishing, the construction of public works, and the introduction of various subsidies. Seasonal laboring in England, often practiced out of necessity by mainland farmers but not by the islanders, and remittances from relatives who have emigrated are income sources which also have served to alleviate poverty; but the major palliative throughout Ireland has been emigration. One of the factors limiting migration from Inis Beag to the mainland until recent decades was the low standard of living which prevailed in the country at large. An islander could not escape local hardships and privations by emigrating to urban centers as he can today; he had to turn his back on Ireland.

Most Inis Beag people believe themselves to be materially poor, although they resent others agreeing publicly with this view. A well-known Dublin newspaper feature writer in 196[illegible]as denounced, and a vow made not to permit him to

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Figure 8. Transporting hay to an outbuilding

249 Those islanders who dwell in thatched houses or who own other buildings which are thatched grow rye, as do a few farmers who use it as fodder. It is planted in recently dug potato fields at the same time as grass and is ready for harvesting the next August. Rye for thatching is pulled rather than cut, and compressed into [342] small bundles which are propped against fences for drying. Pulling is preferred because grass and weeds can be separated out, and the roots will furnish friction [343] to keep the bundles from slipping when they are placed on the roof later. After drying, the bundles are carried to barns or outbuildings to be flailed, winnowed, and stored until used a month or two afterward. Flailing is done by striking the tops of the bundled plants against a stone placed a foot from an indoor wall, in such a way that the seeds are separated and collected at the base of the wall. Later the grain is spread on a flagging and winnowed by allowing handfuls of seed to [246] fall to the rock surface so that wind blows away the chaff. Rye used as fodder is planted with grass and cut when "green" at the same time that hay is cut, and is handled in almost the same way as the latter.

Care of Livestock

• 175 The export of fish, kelp, pigs, cattle, and sheep accounted for 90 percent 434 of the income of Inis Beag folk in 1893, as reported by the Congested Districts 437 Board. The sale of cattle and sheep ranked last, for at that time indigenous soils [311] were not adequate either in extent or grass yield to support many livestock, and 178 fields on the terraces were used mostly for farming. But over the past 70 years
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The knit sweater called a "ganzie," is not a traditional item of wear, as is commonly asserted by writers, but was introduced in the 1890s as a cottage industry by the Congested Districts Board, which sent instructors to Inis Beag to teach the women there the manner of knitting the intricate patterns. Only children wear the ganzie, for men always have preferred a dark sweater of simple design which is indigenous to the island. The patterns bear such euphonious names as "crooked road," "figure eight," "double diamond," "rosebud," "honeycomb," and "blackberry," and most of them are common to the rest of Ireland, the British Isles, and other parts of Europe. The term ganzie, in fact, undoubtedly derives from the Channel island, Guernsey. A widely held belief that each Inis Beag family has its own distinctive sweater pattern, comparable to the Scottish tartan, by which its drowned members are identified is unfounded. Seventeen women knit for the mainland company, which supplies them with yarn, and are paid between 2 pounds and 2 pounds and 10 shillings by weight for each sweater. Some are able to knit a ganzie in a week, but others take two or three weeks; one woman made 41 sweaters during 1959. A girl working steadily at the knitting factory can earn slightly more in a week than one knitting a ganzie in that time, but most girls choose to knit sweaters because they can be at home where their task seems less tedious. Some women prefer to sell their sweaters to tourists and can on occasion dispose of a ganzie for as much as 6 pounds, but these women must purchase their own yarn, and marketing is much less secure as tourists seldom come into island homes. At present, the finest ganzies are knitted by women in Co. Donegal, a fact which Inis Beag women admit privately.

The woven belt and cowhide shoes of Inis Beag folk have an ancient heritage, just as has the *curach*. It is not known when the belt, or *crios*, was introduced into Ireland, but it has been worn for centuries by Portuguese seamen. Known as "pampooties," the island style footwear once was worn widely in Ireland, although made from various hides and skins, and a century ago was cut from sealskin in Inis Beag. The term pampootie is of Scandinavian origin, and my wife and I have heard it used among Danish peasants to describe their shoes. Today, a Danish expatriate who has lived in the island for almost a decade supports himself by weaving *crios* on a loom for the folk; he also sells them to visitors and to mainland shops along with woven ties and bookmarks. Although "the Dane" has come to monopolize the production of belts, several women occasionally make them by hand for their menfolk and to sell. The manufacture of *crios* once was largely in the hands of women, and they wore them sewn to their petticoats and tied at the side, but now it is mostly men who wear them. Three yards long and two inches wide, the belt is woven with a multitude of colors and designs and is worn wrapped twice around the body and tucked in at either side of the waist. Elders prefer traditional designs and shun the color green because it is unlucky, but young men are coming to like experimental patterns and all of the basic colors and their many shades. Contrary to popular opinion, there are no family designs. Some persons, however, ask for the same pattern every two or three years when they buy a new *crios* if they believe that it has brought them luck.

Pampooties are favored in Inis Beag because they are ideally suited for wet rocks and frail canoes. The spiked heels of female tourists and visiting emigrants who come ashore in *curach* are viewed with trepidation by crewmen, who are sup-

16:Messenger E-4,5 (1955-1966) 1969 ER6 Rural Irish ER6
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ported on the sea only by thin canvas. Most men are able to make pampooties for themselves, but several islanders specialize in the craft and sell their wares to their fellows and to visitors. Usually cured hides are imported from the mainland, and 40 pairs of pampooties can be fashioned from a whole cowhide. They are cut to shape the foot, have the hair outside, are secured front and back by lacing, and when used daily will last about two months. To be pliable, they must be kept moist, so they are dipped in water when they become dry and hardened; however, because they are worn constantly in wet grass and sand, they seldom lose their softness.

In this chapter, I have considered all of the important means of gaining a livelihood in Inis Beag. Some I have discussed at length, while others I have touched on briefly and will reconsider later; but two thus far not referred to—piloting and recovering objects washed ashore—I would like to take up before ending the chapter. Only one pilot remains in the island, but early in the century men of several families guided vessels through the east sound to ports on the mainland. Then it was customary to place lookouts at the high points of Inis Beag to scan the horizon for masts of approaching ships, and often several canoes would race miles out to sea in order to be first to contact a potential customer. The Terrace villager who still plies the trade seldom contacts likely vessels now, and more often than not his services are refused once he rows to a ship, what with modern charts and navigating instruments. Piloting is still very much alive in the memories of the folk, and one of the popular genres of folklore is the humorous anecdote dealing with real and imagined experiences of pilots. One of these concerns a crew fishing in the east sound which was hailed by the captain of a passing schooner. Although not a pilot, an old member of the crew claimed that he was and climbed aboard, and the captain agreed to hire him after he said that he knew the sound and coastline well. Soon after, the ship struck bottom "with a great bump," and the enraged captain shouted, "I thought you said you knew all the rocks in the sound.", to which the islandman replied in a quiet voice, "I did, and that's one of them." The same old man in another tale earns the job by boxing the compass in Gaelic for the captain; the humor of this story lies in the fact that the captain does not know Irish, and the islandman, who in turn does not know the points of the compass, simply recites terms of reference[2] for kin in a rhythmic manner.

One of the oldest of Inis Beag traditions is the "law of wrack"—the right of islanders to confiscate objects of value which have washed ashore. If a person discovers wrack, he establishes ownership by placing a stone atop it or by carrying it above high water mark, and no one else will claim it. Some islanders wander along the shores at dawn seeking what objects may have washed in during the night, especially timber, and those who habitually engage in this pursuit are known disparagingly as "wrack-boomers"—so poor that they must depend on salvage. During the two world wars, the economy of Inis Beag was bolstered by the immense amount of wreckage which drifted in from torpedoed ships, and the islanders still reminisce about particular visitations of flour, planks, and other

[2] See p. 75 for a definition of terms of reference.

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422 valuable commodities. Vessels which have run aground in the past have been
[175] stripped, and in 1960 a portion of the stricken freighter's cargo—namely Scotch
[722] whiskey, yarn, boiler pipes, toilet fixtures, sacks, shoes, and other goods—was
[432] obtained by the folk under the law of wrack. The importance and tenacity of the law were attested by the fact that "salvaging" was continued in the face of opposition from ship owners, insurance representatives, customs officials, visiting police, and even the imprecations of curate and parish priest.

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declining steadily, and between 1951 and 1960 there were only nine marriages between folk who remained in the island—and since then but five. 582

The prevalence of celibacy and late marriage is a matter of grave concern to the people. My analysis of these phenomena reveals over 20 contributing factors, of which I will consider only the most important—and these briefly, since most of them will be addressed further within the contexts of the family, personality, and emigration. The one most often voiced by the islanders is the emigration of girls in increasing numbers at younger ages; of the nine girls eligible for marriage, only one is older than 25 years, and several are contemplating emigration. The folk are much less prone to talk of the single estate and late marriage than they are of emigration, which share many of the same causes, and they appear to know fewer of the causes of the former and are less willing to assign relative weights when assessing them. The cause of all three conditions most often cited by both writers and social scientists is the system of inheritance, whereby land cannot be subdivided but is passed on to one son who must wait to marry until his father dies or is willing (or forced) to pass on the land, and his siblings have married or emigrated. By this time, the son is usually middle-aged and cautious in making his choice of a spouse. Most fathers in Inis Beag are loath to surrender their property, and with it control of the family, to sons wishing to marry, and some even will postpone receiving the old age in order to maintain their status position past the age of 70 years. A father who does not choose a successor among several sons until late in his life—which is a common occurrence—can retard their marriages if they choose to "wait it out." Equally loath to disturb the family *status quo* is the mother, who fears not only the loss of her commanding position in the household, but the loss of her son's affection to an incoming daughter-in-law. The man who wishes to marry and is prevented from doing so by domineering and jealous parents is the subject of gossip, and his plight is regarded as a "shame."

582 589 829 [167] 582 589 428 593 [888]

Since late marriage has been a persistent phenomenon in Ireland since the great famine, it has become institutionalized and serves as an expectation for young people. That the folk are aware of this cause is attested by their frequent advice to offspring that they postpone marriage to conform to island tradition. This advice invariably is buttressed by a rationale of males not having enough "sense" to marry until they approach the age of 40 years. Reflected in the rationale is the system of male age grading conceptualized in Inis Beag: a man is a "boy" or "lad" until 40 years of age, an adult until 60 years, middle-aged until 80, and old-aged after that (exhilarating to the American anthropologist who comes from a society obsessed with the "cult of youth"). Another rationale for late marriage often heard in Inis Beag is the impossibility of divorce in Catholic Ireland, which demands that the choice of a spouse be well considered. It appears that this argument is usually used to explain late marriage when other factors are in fact responsible—certainly when "considering" covers two or more decades.

582 175 829 [561] [586]

Two closely linked causes of celibacy and late marriage seldom broached in Inis Beag are male solidarity and the unwillingness of many men to accept the responsibilities of marriage, particularly its sexual responsibilities. Marriage is looked on with trepidation, or at least as something less than desirable. The marriageable man in his late twenties and thirties is usually sexually repressed to an unbelieve-

582 589 581 862 [593] [154]

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able degree, has been dominated by parents who have allowed him to take on few major responsibilities, has a mother who acts as a wife surrogate in all but the sexual sphere (at least consciously), has established a routinized existence, and has male companions for whom he feels affection and with whom he shares numerous work and recreational activities. Some men who have been promised or willed land, and who have consenting parents and brides-to-be, will balk at a match because they are "too happy with the lads," and, if persuaded to marry, they will attempt to retain as much of their bachelor role as possible within marriage—"The men run with the boys before marriage and carry on the same afterward." Several bachelors and spinsters almost have married several times in succession, only to find the sexual commitment on each occasion too difficult to make at the last moment.

Before the coming of a permanent priest to Inis Beag, it is asserted that young people contemplating marriage were able to "keep company" frequently and openly before the union was arranged, and that some pairings were "love matches." But since then—with the separation of the sexes from late infancy on, the ubiquity of gossip and opprobrium, and the actions of priests—courting almost has disappeared, and it is not uncommon for a couple awaiting their wedding to have little personal knowledge of one another. Contact on the island between the sexes today is limited to meetings at the few parties which take place, at the occasional summer dances, or *céilí*, held on a large flagging near the school, and sometimes "at the well" or "walking to the cow" during daylight hours. Two generations ago, private Sunday afternoon strolls afforded young men and women the opportunity of coming to know one another well, but these "rambles" about the island are done now only by couples of the same sex—one of the several manifestations of institutionalized friendship. Choice once again seems to be intruding into matchmaking, however, with the increasing demands of acculturated youths for marriage with "love."

Matches are the end product either of secret bargaining between the families involved which can extend for weeks, or of the impetuous act of a man who—goaded by companions or by stout, or both—will visit the home of his "chosen" after dark to negotiate, accompanied by a kinsman or close friend. The bargain, once made, is sealed by the male participants with the emptying of a bottle of whiskey brought by the prospective groom, after which a boy or young man of the household is sent out—often after midnight—to summon relatives and acquaintances for a night long party, known as the *cleambnas* (the word for matchmaking in Gaelic). Sometimes this party is followed by as many as three more on consecutive nights, the expense for which is borne by the family of the bride-to-be. When the bargaining is protracted, it usually is done during the 12 days of Christmas or the final fortnight of Lent, and the match is announced soon after Epiphany or Easter. Hearsay concerning possible matches abounds at these times, but each year "most rumors are dry," unless, of course, "with a lot of drinking and urging a man might decide to take the plunge." It was customary in the past for the wedding to take place four days after the *cleambnas*, but now the service must wait from one to three weeks until the genealogies of the families of the bride and groom are examined by the parish priest to determine their degree of consanguinity.

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persons considered overly superstitious. Interesting to note here is the fact that even before the beginning of this century, strength of belief in the pagan supernatural varied among the folk.

Three water dwellers found in the ocean surrounding Inis Beag are the mermaid, sea spirit, and water horse. At least one and maybe three mermaids are associated with particular locations along the coastline of the island. This spirit usually is found sitting on a rock with her fish tail in the water and combing her long hair, although she has been seen hovering over the surface of the sea in a "robe of mist." Discussion of her in the pubs always induces embarrassment among the men, because her perfectly formed female upper body is nude and not always hidden by her tresses; she appears to delight in exposing herself to the puritanical folk. The sea spirit is called the "headless body" for the reason that his seaweed covered hulk lacks any appendages. Like the seal who bears a human soul, he favors following in the wake of *curach*—bobbing up and down in the water and staring balefully at the seamen with huge eyes. Only by dropping an object containing gold into the ocean deeps, which the spirit finds irresistible, can his pursuit be impeded short of rowing back to the island. My wife and I brought to Inis Beag a foot-high statue of a troll, purchased two years before in Norway, made of moss with large glass eyes, which we hung from the wall of our kitchen (as we had from the dashboard of our car) as a good luck charm. It aroused excitement among fishermen who visited us because of its resemblance to the headless body; one man reasoned that this being must inhabit all of the northern seas, and probably arouses equal consternation among Scottish and Scandinavian seafarers. The water horse is a demon counterpart of the mermaid, with black body of a steed and tail of a giant fish. Until 40 years ago, it lived in the fresh water lake of Inis Beag, where it was seen on certain nights traveling abreast the surface with its head held high and mane waving in the wind. Now it is seen only at sea and infrequently at great distance.

The single pookah of Inis Beag resides in a Copper-Bronze Age tumulus (see Fig. 12), which became a medieval cemetery with rough headstones still in place; located on the western margin of the common land, it is known as the Hill of Ferns. In the Middle Ages, the church urged systematic reinterpretation of Christian and pagan elements (It was advocated as early as 601 by Pope Gregory VII in a letter to priests who were proselytizing the primitive Britons.). This policy is attested in Inis Beag and neighboring islands not only by Christian graveyards being located contiguous to pagan ones, but by Christian church buildings incorporating Druidic temples and Celtic holy wells being appropriated by Christian worshippers. During the day, the "dog of the tumulus," as this demon is called, will twist the limbs of unwary individuals who chance to fall asleep on the mound, and at night it is known to race across the sands of strand and common land, altering its size at will from that of a small dog to that of a bull, to frighten those who might be passing. It appears that Irish emigrants carried both the mermaid and pookah abroad with them as early as the seventeenth century, at least to the West Indies. In doing research among the "Black Irish" of Montserrat during 1965, 1966, and last year, I discovered a mermaid with white skin who guards a pot of gold buried on top of Chance's Mountain, and a pookah in the form of a

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misfortune to those whom he compliments. The extent of his power is measured by how soon after the compliment his victim suffers, and how serious is the calamity. Most feared of recent witches is a man who as a youth caused a newly arrived curate on his first walk of the island to fall and break his leg; within seconds after the boy praised the vigorous stride of the priest, "the poor creature disappeared behind a fence, feet over head." The folk seldom compliment one another, and when they do they append "God bless you." to the statement as a precautionary incantation. Persons with the evil eye neglect to do this, it is said. I often have wondered—when in a mood to credit the existence of fairies which turn on water faucets in the dead of night—if a series of misfortunes which befell me during 1960 and 1961 was somehow linked to one of these persons wishing me a good year, without uttering "God bless you.", as my wife and I put off the strand in a canoe at the end of our research. The same incantation is voiced by those in the vicinity of one who sneezes—in this case to prevent his soul from being captured by the fairies. It is tempting to attribute the unwillingness of Irish peasants generally to pay compliments to the age-old but now forgotten dread of being accused of the evil eye and of inviting fairies and hag witches to substitute changelings for human children.

Priests of the church at least a century ago rid Inis Beag of most religious practitioners of pagan disposition, but there is evidence that before their acculturative influence was felt diviners and workers of good and evil magic practiced techniques which had their roots in the Iron Age. Divining now is restricted mostly to the seeking of omens by everyone, and the astrological and tea leaf reading skills of several persons who do not charge for their services. The principal workers of magic in the past were herbalists, animal doctors, and bone setters; an animal doctor in Inis Beag and a bone setter in a nearby island still ply their inherited specialties for pay, but both men claim that they are practical folk physicians and do not command pagan or Christian spiritual powers. Just as the islanders share a common body of omens which are used to avoid the misfortunes and compound the benefits in store for them, they also share a common knowledge of folk medicines, which some believe to be more efficacious than the medicines provided by doctor and nurse. Indigenous medicines once were prescribed by workers of magic, misnamed "herb witches"—old women who gathered plants at dawn and "brewed" them in a variety of ways to affect various cures. The dew on the plants, as well as the manner in which they were compounded, gave these medicines a magical potency. To meet such a witch as she was returning from collecting ingredients meant that one was doomed to take on the affliction of the patient being treated by the hag. A similar belief, well represented in the folklore of the islanders, is the transference of disease from a human being to an animal that he has befriended earlier.

Christian and Pagan Reinterpretations

The four quarterly festivals of the Celts were: Imbolc, celebrated on February 1st, Beltaine on May 1st, Lughnasa on August 1st, and Samhain on November 1st.

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November 1st. Imbolc heralded the coming of spring with the lactation of ewes, while at Beltaine cattle were driven to open grazing after passing between bonfires which magically protected them against disease and ensured their fertility. The harvest commenced with Lughnasa, and the grazing season ended with Samhain. Of these festivals, Imbolc has become reinterpreted with the feast of St. Brigid; Beltaine and Samhain, known today as May Day and Allhallows respectively, have remained almost untouched by Christianity and are observed in Inis Beag; but Lughnasa has disappeared from island tradition. Lughnasa still is celebrated in many parts of Ireland and is the subject of a monumental folklore study—Maire MacNeill's *The Festival of Lughnasa*; until the introduction of early potatoes into Inis Beag, harvesting commenced on this day, but any other practices associated with Lughnasa were abandoned long ago. Minor pagan festivals have become reinterpreted with Whitsuntide and the feasts of St. John, St. Martin, and St. Stephen, all of which are observed in Inis Beag.

Brigid, the most renowned of Irish female saints, was a cowherd and therefore is associated with cattle and with flowers, such as the dandelion, which nourish young lambs in the spring. On the last day of January, a small "Brigid's Cross" is fashioned from straw in each household of Inis Beag, and is thrust into the thatching at the end of the feast day. Crosses once were made from rushes, wood, metal, and even paper, and it is possible to determine the age of a thatched cottage being dismantled or renovated by counting the number of crosses salvaged from the straw debris. The Celts worshipped the sun whose symbol was the swastika, and the Brigid's Cross takes this form. It is a charm which protects the house (and the byre on the mainland) and those within it from harm, especially by fire, during the year. At the beginning of this century, a destitute woman who lived alone used to go from door to door begging for food and carrying a large "Brigid's Doll" made of straw and dressed immaculately in white with a picture of the saint on its breast. Some of the folk pulled straw from the doll to manufacture their crosses. After the woman recited the following poem, she was presented with food in honor of the saint, for which she blessed each person in the household with the doll:

Here comes Brigid	She is deaf and
Dressed in white.	She is dumb.
Give her something	For God's sake,
For the night.	Give her some.

Today, small groups of girls travel about the island emulating their predecessor by begging for coins to buy candy and donate to the church. A Brigid's Doll dressed in confirmation garb is carried by the leader of each group, and is used to confer blessings after the girls have recited in unison the two verses.

May Eve and Allhallows' Eve are both times when it is dangerous to go out of doors alone at night or be abroad after midnight, for the "big fellow" roams the back of the island, and everywhere pagan fairies, witches, vindictive ghosts, and the dog of the tumulus search for human victims. The safety of cattle is of particular concern to the folk on May Eve, and a common practice is to attach to the horn or tail of a cow a cloth containing a piece of iron which has

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533 the Gaelic speaking Scottish fishermen. Only a few tunes accommodate the songs
[539] sung in the island, and the text is far more important to listeners than the ability of a singer to carry the melody. Much admired is the person who can sing a long ballad without pausing or making a mistake, and each episode of the song is listened to attentively, while an occasional, "God be with you.", "Good man.", or "That's it." from the audience urges the singer on or rewards his efforts.

123 The records of songs that my wife and I brought to Inis Beag with us fea-
533 ture performers who sing in both Gaelic and English, and the latter were favored
177 by the islanders. Contrary to our expectations, they disliked our Gael Linn records
[186] from Dublin, because they could not understand the Irish of the singers; nor did they care for a commercial record cut in a nearby island, for the ethnocentric reason that the singers there are thought to be inferior to their own. We soon had to learn folk songs, as we often were "called out" to sing, but our American songs although admired as to melody, did not arouse the interest of our listeners as to text. "The Cowboy's Lament," once learned, came to be "my song" and was always requested at parties; it is now sung by others in my absence, but never when I am
[83] in the island. Just as this song appeals to the masochism of the folk, my wife's singing of "The Lavender Cowboy"—"who had only two hairs on his chest"—in a pub aroused their sexual puritanism, and was never sung again after its introduction because of the embarrassed response of the men. Since we ordered many Irish folksong books in order to learn texts, island singers borrowed them to commit to memory additional texts themselves, and they also requested that we give them texts of "cowboy songs" taken from records.

123 My ballad was prompted by the absence of an indigenous composer, some
533 impromptu rhyming that I had done in the pubs, an eye witness account of the rescue (written by my wife but dictated by me, according to local opinion) which appeared in a Dublin newspaper, and was urged on me by my respondents. I chose the air of the popular broadside song, "Brian O'Linn," and copied the lyric style of its composer, and based as many verses as possible on the more prevalent rumors which arose in the months following the shipwreck. Copying the folklore idiom as accurately as I could, I also employed many Irish terms—especially place-names—and eschewed Yank expressions while incorporating local ones at every
[177] opportunity. In time, island balladiers came to substitute words and phrases, and even stanzas, as they molded the song more closely to their tongue and milieu. Some lines came to be used as proverbs and others to stimulate a variety of conversational responses.

535 Little is known of the history of Irish dancing. The earliest references to
• 175 round and long dances are from the sixteenth century, and they appear to be older than the single, or "step," dances. The step and figure dances of today were created by the dancing masters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (O'Keeffe and O'Brien 1912:13–27). Step dancing preceded figure dancing in Inis Beag, although there is a difference of opinion among elders as to whether or
535 not the coast guard families introduced figure dancing a hundred years ago. Young
178 adults no longer step dance, although since 1960 children have been stimulated
[874] to learn the skill through instruction in the school and by watching and participating in the dances of the students attending summer language school; so this may

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rejuvenate the moribund tradition. However, several men past the age of 40 years still are able to perform jigs, reels, hornpipes, and hop-jigs with dexterity, "when the humor is on them," and are called out at parties and in the pubs; a few women will step dance in their homes or at small social gatherings.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the rigid body and arms of the step dancer are an early nineteenth century product of Jansenist doctrine in the church, which attempted to desexualize dancing. Most of the movement is below the hips of the dancer, and it is the feet of the performer which are watched intently by the audience, at least openly. Inis Beag men move their upper bodies and arms more than is customary on the mainland, and they are not as graceful as other Irish dancers.

Figure dancing is called "set" dancing in Ireland, and there are many such dances, each of which combines a number of simple and complex figures performed by the couples. There is only one set in Inis Beag; it bears no name and is danced by one or more groups of four couples each. The many figures of the dance are simple, and it takes about 20 minutes to complete. I have heard young dancers complain at the end of a night of the tediousness of the single set, and some of them are learning other Irish figures at language school dances—"The Walls of Limerick" and "The Bridge of Athlone," among others. The most enjoyed movement of the local set is the one at the end in which the man holds his partner closely and twirls her almost violently, sometimes for longer than is prescribed so that the musician must pause or alter his rhythm. With bodily contact between partners otherwise so limited, perhaps this figure allows the expression of repressed sexuality.

Parties

It is appropriate to describe the Inis Beag party and a festive night at the pub in this chapter, because they are esthetic as well as social events, in which are combined storytelling, music, song, and dance. Parties are very much the same, whether held in the winter or the summer or to welcome home a long departed emigrant or to "drag home" a new bride. Only two rooms of the house are utilized —the kitchen and "the room" adjoining it—and benches are placed along the walls to supplement the chairs and bed on which guests will sit. The barrel or two of stout to be served is placed in the back hall off the kitchen, if there is such a hall, or in a back corner of the kitchen, and one man is assigned the task of dispensing the drink and remaining at his post throughout the night. Another man acts as "pourer" and fills a bucket from which he pours the stout into several mugs and glasses which are circulated from man to man. A bottle of whiskey is opened and proffered only to the old men, who often sit in a group beside the fireplace and exchange anecdotes and tales. On a table in "the room" are placed bottles of wine and soft drinks to accommodate the women and non-drinkers among the men before and after refreshments are served. Sometimes an elderly woman will drink surreptitiously of the whiskey or stout, and it is customary for the musicians and those who sing and step dance the most to be awarded extra amounts of stout. Women

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women in the island and are attracted by what they consider to be a more rewarding life on the mainland and abroad, and so emigrate for these reasons. One of the most "pitied" girls in the island is a returned emigrant to the United States, who, despite being 24 years of age and suitable for marriage in every way, is not being courted, although it is known that she came back to Inis Beag to obtain a husband.

All of the conditions making for personality depression—the intrusion of priests into secular affairs, hypochondria, malicious gossiping, poverty, boredom, and isolation—also instigate emigration. My analysis assigns the secular excesses of the clergy and their implementation of the Jansenist doctrines of the Catholic Church in Ireland as the primary push factors in emigration and supports the contention made by Paul Blanshard that, "When all the reasons for a flight from Ireland have been mentioned, there still remains a suspicion that Irish young people are leaving their nation largely because it is a poor place in which to be happy and free. Have the priests created a civilization in which the chief values of youth and love are subordinate to Catholic discipline?" (Blanshard 1954:154). What "remains a suspicion" to Blanshard as regards all of Ireland is very much a reality in Inis Beag.

Other internal factors accounting for emigration which are considered important by the folk are the deadening of initiative by government services and subsidies and the institutionalization of emigration itself. While many islanders believe that the government ought to support even further the local economy in order to combat emigration, others feel that its present level of benevolence has had a deleterious effect on their character. Young people observing the indolence of their elders, according to this opinion, are shamed into seeking a more active life away from Inis Beag. In my estimation, this is a superficial cause, but the institutionalization of emigration is a vital factor, more recognized by youth than by their parents. Just as in the case of late marriage, emigration since famine times gradually has become an expectation—a "way of life"—and it will stimulate some folk to leave even though, in the estimation of their fellows, it might be advantageous for them to remain. When a young man says that he has an "itch to go to England and work for a spell," he usually is being motivated in this manner.

Among the external causes of emigration, the most significant are the growth of prosperity on the mainland and abroad, the influence of ever increasing numbers of tourists who visit and returned emigrants who come for short stays or to retire in Inis Beag, the impact of the mass media of communication, and the increasing availability of scholarship funds for children to attend secondary schools on the mainland. The United States has been a land of freedom, opportunity, and prosperity to the Irish since the early seventeenth century, but particularly during and after the famine (Approximately 1,000,000 Irish emigrated between 1846 and 1851, and another 1,500,000 perished from hunger, according to Woodham-Smith 1962:411.). The first record of substantial emigration from Inis Beag is in 1822, and from that time until the Second World War most islanders migrated to the United States, never to return. However, with the growth of prosperity in England after 1946, the stream of emigration shifted in that direction. Not only did jobs become plentiful across the Irish Sea then, but large, viable ethnic communities served by Irish clergy had sprung up in the larger cities. It became possi-

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[For information pertaining to the historical background of Irish national character and personality development, the relation to sexual repression and theological dogma, see 17: Messenger, ER6 Rural Irish, category 116, pp. 20-27.]

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places a high premium upon continence, penance and, in most spheres of life, on abstemiousness (Humphreys 1966: 25–26).

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Humphreys further points out that "the effects of the religious tradition of the Irish, let alone of the countryman, upon the social behavior and attitudes of the people has never been systematically studied from a sociological point of view." He notes that the classic study, *Family and Community in Ireland*, by Conrad Arensberg and Solon Kimball, based on research done over thirty years ago, "leaves the matter virtually untouched," and "attributes the countryman's attitude towards sex almost exclusively to the structure of life in the rural community."

> Granted the profound influence social structure has on such a basic matter, a purely structural-functional analysis is hard put to explain adequately the quite ascetic sexual morality of the Irish countryside. . . . [An] attitude similar to that of the countryman is far from uncommon in a city such as Dublin—and among New Dubliners and Old Dubliners to boot—whose social structure differs so radically from that of the countryside. Structural-functional explanations of attitudes do hold up to a point. But world-views and their ethical consequences also have their special effect (Humphreys 1966: 24–27).

Monasticism and Augustinianism certainly "set the stage" for later Jansenism, although all three probably are connected with basic Irish culture and personality traits of long standing.

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Jansenism is succinctly placed in its historical context in Ireland by Joe McCarthy.

> Like most everything in Ireland, the severe strictness of the old-time Catholic clergymen was rooted in historical events of the country's past. During the dark era of the anti-Catholic Penal Laws in the 18th Century, young Irishmen had to study for the priesthood on the Continent. In the early 1790's, the British Government became alarmed by the rise of Theobald Wolfe Tone's Irish Protestant revolutionary movement and made hurried bids of appeasement to Irish Catholics in an effort to win their loyalty. One of these conciliatory moves was the establishment of the Catholic theological seminary at Maynooth in 1795. Perhaps not entirely by accident, the faculty of the new college was staffed by refugees from the French Revolution, promonarchy theologians who hated Tone's republican ideas. Most of these theologians had been influenced by Jansenism—the rigid and gloomy doctrine, denounced as Calvinistic by the Jesuits, that man is a helplessly doomed being who must endure punishing soul-searching and rigorous penances to prove his love of God. Mere faith and constant church-going . . . are not

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*831 155 175 178 181 779 795 798 [785] enough to win salvation. . . . Thanks to the influence of the French theologians at Maynooth, most of the Irish Catholic hierarchy sided with the British against Tone in the rebellion of 1798, and supported Prime Minister William Pitt's Act of Union. Their forbidding and stern Jansenist theory strongly flavored Irish Catholicism until it was finally officially discouraged in the middle of the 19th Century. The last vestiges of the doctrine have long since disappeared from Irish Catholicism, but the unusual devotion of the Irish people today to physically punishing religious pilgrimages possibly could be traced in part back to the old teaching of Maynooth that love of God must be demonstrated by harder acts than receiving the sacraments and going to daily Mass (McCarthy 1964: 78).

*831 155 178 181 779 798 Our research reveals that in some areas of Ireland "the last vestiges of the doctrine" are still associated with Irish Catholicism. In fact, one Dublin social scientist with whom I correspond asserts that Jansenism as manifested in sexual repression probably reached its zenith in the 1930s and has gradually been dying out since then. However, it is still very apparent, even among "emancipated" Dubliners of the middle and upper classes.

A much harsher evaluation of Jansenism, again in an historical context, is found in Bryan McMahon's chapter in *The Vanishing Irish*, edited by Fr. John O'Brien, a collection which also includes pertinent essays by Arland Ussher and the editor himself. McMahon says:

[785] Associated with the heresy of Jansenism were the principles of an exaggerated moral and disciplinary rigorism under the pretext of a return to the primitive Church. The Celtic spirit, despite or rather because of its essential volatility . . . would appear to me to provide an ideal field for the culture of Jansenism. The penances of the early Celtic monks were severity itself. . . . Today, when the idea of physical penance would appear to be repugnant to the entire world, such laudable manifestations of physical denial as the exercises of Lough Derg and Croagh Patrick are beacons amid the darkness. But the danger is that by a flaw in the Celtic nature we are apt to be led by overcompensation into penitential excesses; then it is that the traits of [874] Jansenism are there to fill lacunae in our nature. Significant in this context is the presence of four refugee doctors of the Sorbonne on the staff of Maynooth College in its early and formative years. [Their] teachings . . . cannot but have in some measure colored . . . the whole course of Irish seminary life and consequently the whole body of Irish lay thought (O'Brien 1953: 215–216).

Might not the "volatile nature" of the "Celtic spirit" and the "flaw in the Celtic nature" whose "lacunae" Jansenism fills be persistent maso-